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**MABANGALALA:
THE RISE OF RIGHT-WING VIGILANTES
IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

Nicholas Haysom

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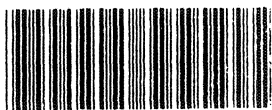
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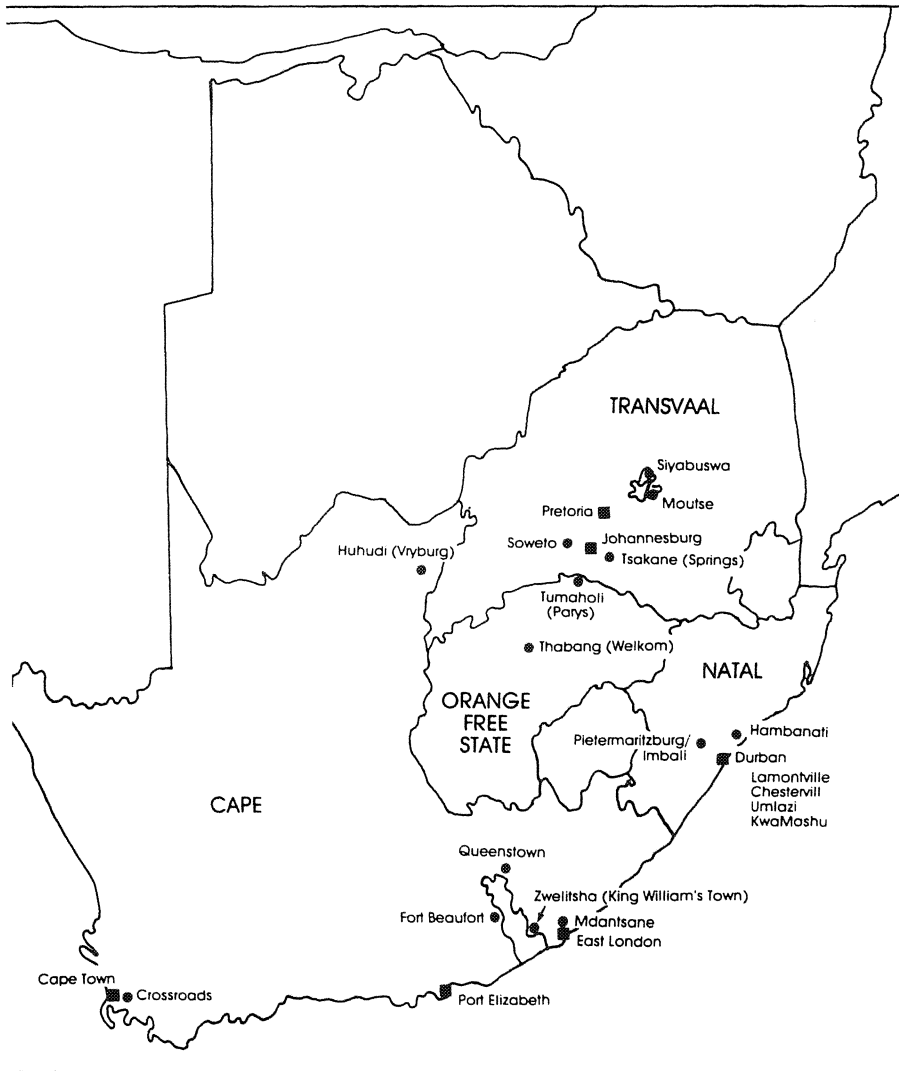
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Towns, Townships and 'Homeland' Areas of SA

PREFACE

This report on vigilantes has been compiled at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the urgent request of the National Committee against Removals, the Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC) and the Black Sash. The publication is based on affidavits and statements collected from all parts of the country and supplemented with reports and interviews. Work commenced on the collection of the reports and the preparation of this publication at the beginning of February 1986 and was completed little over a month later. It patently could not have been done by one person and is in reality the result of the collaborative efforts of a number of people. The following people must be especially credited with assisting in the preparation of this report, although responsibility for its contents remains my own.

TRAC personnel who assisted in collecting material on Transvaal communities and in reading drafts of the case studies; particularly Marge Brown (on Huhudi), Aninka Claasens (on Ekangala and Moutse), Alan Morris (on Leandra), and Joanne Yawitch (on Moutse and Leandra).

The publication also relied on reports from Clive Plaskett on the regions of the Ciskei and Queenstown and on a report by Peter Harris on Fort Beaufort.

Material from the Cape Peninsula was collected by Philip van Ryneveld and Josette Cole of the Surplus People Project, Laurine Platzky of the National Committee Against Removals, Pippa Green and Paul Vorwerk of the PFP.

Those who assisted in the collection of material from Natal included S Mgoduso and other members of the Legal Resources Centre in Durban, Anne Calvin and Georgina Stevens of the Black Sash Crisis Committee.

Material on the Ashton vigilantes was collected by Dawie Bosch of the Montague-Ashton Community Service.

Jeremy Seekings of the Department of Political Science, University of the Witwatersrand, provided material on Thabong and Tumaholi, gathered in the preparation of his thesis.

At the Centre for Applied Legal Studies, the assistance of Laura

Mangan, Lydia Levin and Ethelwyn Rebelo in a number of capacities including reading, organizing and typing the material was invaluable. John Dugard and Mary-Anne Cullinan read the material with an eye for grammatical sense and legal liability.

NICHOLAS HAYSOM
5 March 1986

THE EMERGENCE OF VIGILANTES

INTRODUCTION

1985 witnessed a rapid escalation in the scale of conflict and violence in South Africa. The spiral of violence began in September 1984 when township-based protests signalled intensified and broad-based resistance to apartheid. The response by the security forces to the protests and resistance was immediate and severe. The heavy-handed response by the authorities was to find an echo in the militant response of township residents in the Vaal and in the Eastern Cape. By August the government had imposed a state of emergency in most of the densely populated townships in these areas. By February 1986 over a thousand persons were estimated to have died in the unrest.

Throughout this period, the media focused on the conflict between the security forces and the residents of the black townships in these Vaal and Eastern Cape areas. A considerable amount of attention was also given to what came to be called 'black-on-black' conflict. The use of this label served to obscure the emergence of a pattern of extra-legal violence by right-wing vigilantes. By referring to all conflict in which both parties were black, as black-on-black conflict, the links and relationships between the conflicting parties and apartheid structures were buried. Furthermore, the label carries with it a racist suggestion of traditional or tribal internecine strife.

By the end of 1985, community leaders from regions as far afield as the Cape Peninsula and the Northern Transvaal were reporting a similar phenomenon — right-wing vigilantes. Although the various vigilante groups can be shown to have quite specific regional characteristics and origins, these groups also share common features which are of immediate concern to human rights activists. Firstly, in most cases, the vigilantes emerged in the latter half of 1985. Secondly, the vigilantes shared a common target group, members or leaders of groups associated with resistance to apartheid or homeland rule. Thirdly, the vigilantes operated brazenly, apparently believing that they enjoyed police support, and indeed in some cases did allegedly enjoy such support.

This book is intended to document the widespread emergence of vigilante groups in 1985. It is also hoped that the detailed study of thirteen communities or regions when placed together will reveal the

characteristics and relationships which these vigilante groups possess. To be sure, this report does not intend to downplay the existence of other forms of official or unofficial violence taking place. However, in view of the lack of systematic attention given to the emergence of vigilantes, and the apparent unwillingness of the authorities to curb these groups, this publication is primarily concerned to expose this new form of terror and disorganization of South Africa's black communities.

Vigilantes

The term 'vigilante' (or 'Mabangalala') has come to have a distinct meaning in South Africa. It does not mean a concerned citizen intent on preserving the safety of his family and 'decent values'. In South Africa the term 'vigilante' has a far more menacing connotation. It is associated with potentially murderous gangs, intent on intimidating, injuring or killing anti-apartheid activists. That, and the fact that they are believed to enjoy police support, is very often all that binds the 'A-team', the 'Pakhatis', the 'Mabangalala', the 'Amadoda', the 'Amosolomzi', the 'Amabutho', the 'Mbhekoto' and the 'Green Berets'.

The motivation and composition of these vigilante groups vary according to the specific politics of the area. But the common fear that activist and human rights campaigners share is best illustrated by a few random examples of vigilante action taken from the studies included in this book.

Mr BM, a supporter of the United Democratic Front (UDF), who lives in Umlazi was at home one evening in August 1985 when a large group of armed men ('Amabutho') surrounded his house and set it alight.

'I woke immediately the fire started but was unable to escape from the house without being burnt in my back, arms and face. My younger brother, Michael, jumped through the window of my mother's bedroom and turned to take my sister's infant child from my sister. As he took the child, he was shot by a member of the armed mob which surrounded him. He was shot in the head. He fell to the ground and dropped the baby. My mother grabbed both of them and pulled them into the bushes around the house. I also hid in the bushes and watched as our house burnt. I noticed three men standing around the house holding guns. One of them was the KwaZulu MP for Umlazi, Winnington Sabelo. My elder sister, Florence, was also shot by a member of the mob as she tried to escape from the flames.'

During August Amabutho gangs had sought out houses of alleged UDF members whom they considered 'troublemakers'. Mr BM was one of these unfortunate victims.

On the night of 21 December 1985, eleven-year-old Themba Mathe was spending the night with a friend when a number of men, including three community councillors, entered the house and sjambokked the boy so badly that he bled through his white vest. The following day, the

boy, in the company of his mother and his friend's father, attempted to report the assault at the Fort Beaufort Police Station. A policeman who was taking his statement was stopped by a superior who told him that he was merely wasting the government's money, and that the children would continue to be beaten. This was one of a number of incidents in which community councillors in Fort Beaufort are alleged to have assaulted residents.

In May 1985 a Thabong youth, David Mabenyane, was apprehended by a group of the Phakathis, a vigilante group making open use of the municipal authority's facilities. He was beaten so badly with sjamboks that he died. After his beating, he was taken to the police station by the vigilantes and left there. This incident occurred when the Phakathis were apparently randomly assaulting youths who they believed were involved in a school boycott.

On 1 January 1986 a large group of Mbhokoto vigilantes from KwaNdebele abducted over 400 men from the Moutse district, a district resisting the jurisdiction of the KwaNdebele homeland authorities, and were taken to a community hall in the capital of KwaNdebele. There they were savagely beaten for several hours before being released. The Prime Minister of KwaNdebele appeared to be supervising the assaults. Some of the victims identified their assailants to the police that very day when they were being escorted back to Moutse. Police have not as yet apprehended any of the assailants.

In Ekangala, Huhudi and Leandra the main targets of vigilante activity have been members or acknowledged leaders of popular civic associations resisting the attempts of the authorities to place the communities under homeland control. Vigilante activity has arisen after the civic associations had managed to secure concrete victories and to establish their bodies as effectively representative of the community. It seems apparent that the object of the vigilante activity was to neutralize these organizations, or to alter the balance of power between pro- and anti-apartheid groupings in the townships.

In short, vigilante activity has been directed at the destruction of opposition to government institutions and policies. The question posed is why this conflict should occur through the medium of vigilantes, and why vigilantes should emerge in 1985? These questions cannot be answered without reviewing the general political crisis that extended throughout South Africa during this year.

South Africa in a Political Crisis

The intimate connection between the emergence of vigilante activity

and the more general political crisis in South Africa appears to be evident from the fact that the vigilantes emerged in 1985 as the political crisis in South Africa deepened, and from the fact that as the crisis of control of black areas extended geographically, so did the incidence of vigilante activity.

Vigilantes are not an entirely new phenomenon in South Africa. For example, vigilantes supervised by the Ciskeian authorities terrorized the inhabitants of Mdantsane during the course of the bus boycott in that town from June to October 1983. This example, and the other cases of unofficial right-wing groups within the homelands, bear resemblance to homeland black shirts crushing dissent and enforcing consent to the homeland authorities (see Miriam Lakob *Human Rights in South Africa's Homelands: the delegation of repression* Fund for Free Expression (1984)). In the urban areas the government has often sought to legitimise conservative tribal courts known as the 'Makgotla'. These courts have imposed savage punishments and generally directed their activities towards the rebellious or disrespectful. *The World*, a black newspaper, reacted to Minister Kruger's indication that the 'Makgotla' be used to curb revolt and be given official powers by stating that: 'No civilised black will submit to backyard tribal justice' (John Kane-Berman *Soweto: Black Revolt White Reaction* (1977) 129). The government dropped its plans for the Makgotla. However 1985 saw an increase in the number of extra legal vigilante groups as well as their forceful emergence in the urban areas.

Opposition to apartheid has intensified since the beginning of the decade. From about the same period, the South African government has undertaken a series of reform initiatives. These reforms, however, fall so far short of the expectations of blacks, that they have served more to discredit their authors. None of the reforms go so far as to depart from the essential framework of white political control over the destiny of South Africa.

Prior to 1984, whites retained control of the sovereign parliament and blacks were expected to exercise their political rights in the under-developed and impoverished homelands which constitute 13 per cent of the land area of South Africa. In 1984 elections took place in terms of a new constitution whereby Indian and coloured persons would be able to elect representatives to a tri-cameral parliament with racially distinct houses but in which the white house would retain ultimate control of the political process.

Blacks in the urban areas had been allowed to participate in elections to an advisory municipal body, the urban black councils. These urban

councils have, in the course of the reform process, been delegated increasing executive functions in the administration of the black townships within South Africa. As the pressure on the South African government to provide for meaningful political participation for black South Africans has increased, suggestions have emanated that such participation should take place in the structures developed out of the urban black councils, now known as the community councils. The political crisis South Africa faced in 1985 and continues to face, is founded on the refusal of black South Africans to accept these inadequate alternatives to effective political participation in the country where they live and work. The expression of resistance to these designs has not found sole expression at the national political level. As the crisis has deepened, resistance to the policies of separate development has taken place at all the levels at which these policies find effect.

In 1984 the United Democratic Front and other organizations launched a nationwide campaign of opposition to the exclusion of blacks from the Constitution. This opposition was directed primarily at the new Constitution as well as what came to be known as the 'Koornhof Bills', Bills which were intended to refashion the institutions of apartheid. In particular these Bills sought to bolster the community councils and to fortify the legislative grid which separated homeland residents from their urban counterparts. The campaign undoubtedly had some success as the percentage polls in both the Indian and coloured elections to the respective Houses of Parliament were extremely low, as were the percentage polls in the elections for community councillors.

At about the same time the economic climate in South Africa began to deteriorate as a recession began to make itself felt and unemployment reached extremely high levels amongst blacks. In the urban areas, short-minded parsimony by the authorities responsible for black local government, led to pressure on the community councils to be self-financing. In view of the long history of inadequate provision of essential services in the townships and the policy actively pursued by the Nationalist government when it came to power, of restricting housing for urban blacks so as to reduce the number of blacks in the white urban areas, dissatisfaction with conditions in the townships began to emerge. When the community councils sought to impose increases in rentals and service charges in order to meet their budgets, a number of civic associations began to orchestrate protest. This confluence of political and economic factors resulted in widespread protest in the townships in the Vaal area from September 1984. While the issues were initially

bread and butter issues, the frustration and resentment of township residents increasingly found personal representation in the community councillors, persons believed to be profiting from their place in the administration of the townships.

At approximately the same time, late 1984, school pupils commenced a nation-wide campaign against inadequate education and were confronted with an authoritarian approach to their representations. The school boycott spread throughout the country so that by late 1984 most areas in the country had been affected. As the school and township protests gathered momentum, a pattern of conflict emerged which was to be tragically measured by a daily death toll. Protest would lead to a confrontation with the police, which was followed by acts of arson and damage to property. At the funerals of victims of these confrontations, police would again confront the mourners. The result would be a spiral of funerals and police confrontation. In late 1984, one of the largest stay-aways in South African history took place when trade unions reacted in response to the call of township residents and school children complaining of inferior schooling, townships conditions, and police brutality.

By the middle of 1985 the existing administrative structures collapsed in the majority of urban areas in the Transvaal and in the Eastern Cape. In order to reimpose and bolster government institutions, particularly the community councils, the police were now fortified by additional personnel from the South African Defence Force. Regular security force patrols seemed to confirm township residents' fears that they were under siege by an occupying army. The mushrooming rate of incidents between security forces and township residents came to a head in July 1985 when the government declared a state of emergency. By the end of 1985 it was estimated that over 10 000 people had been detained either under laws relating to the security of the state and public safety or homeland security legislation. At the time of writing there has been little evidence that the level of conflict in South Africa's black areas is likely to abate.

In the homelands, resistance to the homeland authorities began to emerge in discrete pockets. The homelands could not be isolated from the unrest which had spread throughout South Africa. Schools boycotts commenced in areas destined to be transferred to homeland administrations, and civic associations began campaigning against their members' loss of their South African citizenship.

It is against this background, a background of increasing popular support for organizations resisting apartheid policies and institutions

and the spreading of civil resistance to hitherto untouched rural regions, that vigilante groups emerged.

The Patterns of Vigilante Activity

It is in the context of the crisis of control in the black areas that vigilantes emerged and attempted to alter the balance of power in these areas — albeit under the slogan of ‘law and order’. Vigilante groups were specially suited for such a purpose. The South African Police (SAP) and South African Defence Force (SADF) are limited by potential publicity and hindered by legal considerations in their ability to perpetrate the deliberate terror and violence needed to combat popular organisations. In any event, it appears that security force intervention only encourages social solidarity and security forces can not coerce support for community councils nor can they administer the townships. These features are illustrated by a Soweto councillor who expressed frustration with conventional responses to township opposition in a speech to a Sofasonke party rally. He stated he had asked the government to allow councillors to avenge attacks on their homes, and to embark on full scale vigilante activities ‘aimed at rooting out “abo siyayinyova” [troublemakers] in the township streets Hopes that security forces would bring peace were a pipe dream’ (Jeremy Seekings ‘Probing the Links’ (1986) 40 *Work in Progress* 28).

In the first section of this book we examine the emergence of vigilantes in the urban areas. These vigilantes can be broadly classified as right-wing, community council-backed vigilantes whose primary targets are groups that threaten the status and function of the community councils.

The case studies of Leandra and Huhudi reveal that popular civic associations came to marginalize community councils through effective grassroots civic activities. The ability of the popular civic associations to achieve concrete gains for the residents and in particular to take the lead in resisting the removal of the communities, casts increasing doubt on the credibility and popularity of the community councils. When the vigilantes took direct action it was against the leaders and prominent members of the Leandra Action Committee and the Huhudi Civic Association.

In a sense the vigilantes proved more effective in dealing with these organizations than had police repression, detentions, or the intrigues of the development boards. In both these communities, the popular residents associations have been forced to retreat from their areas of operation. Unlike the random and indiscriminate violence which takes

place when the police confront popular organisations, vigilante terror is more specifically targetted on the leaders of the organizations. When leaders are systematically assaulted or killed and the police appear unwilling or unable to curb the activities of vigilantes, it is obvious that no popular organisation can continue to function openly. In such cases, it is not only vigilante interests that are served but also those of the official agencies that the popular organisation challenged. It is no coincidence that the vigilantes and the security police have focused their attention on the same groups in some of these areas. And, as one commentator has pointed out, vigilantes in magisterial districts not covered by the state of emergency have disrupted civic and youth organization to a greater extent than have security forces in townships under emergency regulations (Jeremy Seekings 'Probing the Links' (1986) 40 *Work in Progress*).

In the cases of Thabong and Fort Beaufort, community councillors are revealed again as being the driving force behind the vigilante activities. In these examples the vigilantes directed their violence at youth groups, principally those involved in school boycotts. However ruthless these groups were, they purported to act under the banner of 'restoring law and order'. This slogan served to legitimate their actions, elicit some sympathy from the police and, in some cases (discussed below), play on a broader disgruntlement with the disruption caused by the unrest. The attitude of three groups, black police personnel, traders, and community councillors, who would naturally ally themselves with such a slogan is captured by the following comments. The mayor of Thabong in explaining his support for vigilante activity to local businessmen stated:

'Under the guidance of council members patrols were organized and inspired by the old axiom "spare the rod and spoil the child". All meetings of potential stone throwers and arsonists were broken up with no more violence than the energetic use of sjamboks and the result has been most satisfying.'

Police, when requested by vigilante victims to curb vigilantes, frequently responded with comments such as 'You come here when you are in trouble, but you forget that you broke our houses' (Jeremy Seekings op cit 27). The third group, traders, are an embryonic middle-class with 'an interest in stability and a natural inclination to conservatism' vacillated in many of the areas between support for vigilantes and fear of popular retribution. Black traders were often linked to the vigilantes (and the community councils) but in other areas were supportive of the youth groups. Their position was neatly captured in a meeting on 13 November 1985 between the Vaal Triangle Chamber

of Commerce and the local police chief. The traders' plaintively requested understanding from 'the law' that they had to associate with popular organisations for fear of being labelled collaborators. The police official suggested they form a 'self-protection group' amongst themselves. The police offered assistance in training such a group. The meeting ended with the police official advising the traders group on how to acquire firearms.

The second section of this book deals with vigilantes in the homelands. The homeland vigilantes appear to be a straightforward attempt to crush opposition to the homeland regimes. In this sense they appear to be little more than paramilitary auxiliaries whose sole function is to prevent the appearance of any organized resistance to the homeland authorities. The origin and motivation behind the rural vigilantes is intimately linked with the structural weakness of the homeland political structures which are generally considered brittle, authoritarian, atavistic and undemocratic. These features in turn are the consequence of the place and function of homelands within the overall framework of the apartheid state.

The third section of this report deals with the geographical area of Natal. Natal has witnessed some of the most savage mob action in South Africa. Most of the incidents have been laid at the door of the Amabutho ('the warriors' — bands of traditionally armed mobs who appear to draw their style and political inspiration from a Zulu chauvinism). In many of the incidents the Amabutho have been linked to persons connected with Inkatha. Inkatha itself has either claimed that the Amabutho have performed a useful social function, or that they have been provoked into violence, and in other cases, Inkatha has denied emphatically that the mobs have formal links with Inkatha. It appears from the study of vigilante violence in Natal, that the features of both urban and rural vigilantes are present in this region.

Urban vigilantes are more complex than their rural counterparts, and often exhibit specific dynamics of their own. Not all vigilante type activity can be simply laid at the door of small groups of community councillors apparently acting with the alleged patronage of the authorities. In some of the areas the vigilante groups have fed off the tensions and divisions within the community. Vigilante groups have varying degrees of support. The last section attempts to show how the tensions within the black community can provide the foundation upon which vigilante activity can be based. The division between hostel dwellers and township residents is an example in point. Migrant workers, often outside the political developments in the township but

subject to the discipline of campaign activists, are one grouping which has been a recruiting ground for vigilante organisers.

The Ashton and Crossroad examples show how vigilantes emerged out of an authoritarian response to, and resentment of, the role played by the youth in these communities. In Ashton, however, what began as just such an authoritarian response to boycotting students became a more extensive vigilante group. Their initial activities won them the collaboration of the police which in turn allowed them to extend their activities but increasingly alienated them from their community.

Indian vigilantes in Natal and coloured vigilantes in Queenstown provide an example of how racially-based vigilantes may develop out of what is perceived to be a threat to their property. However once established, the vigilantes take on all the characteristics of a police reserve and begin to turn their attention towards known critics of the government. In particular the Queenstown case is notable, firstly as the police appear to have given their express sanction to the formation of the vigilante group from its inception and, secondly, because Queenstown provides a disturbing example of how the state has inducted the vigilantes into its formal machinery of law and order.

It is not always so clear that particular vigilante groups have the kind of direct sanction or support from the police as they did in Crossroads or Queenstown. However the fact remains that merely a reluctance to curb vigilante activity or a failure to intervene in conflict in the townships allows one group a substantial power over the other. The effect on the organizations and residents is much the same whether the police actively sanction and support the vigilantes or whether they merely appear incapable of curbing vigilante activities. In the case of Paarl, where political feuding broke out between rival factions, the police were widely believed by the UDF youth to have sided with the black consciousness (AZANYU) grouping and were accordingly compelled to leave the area or resort to extracting savage retribution by force. As the conflict between rival groups escalates it allows for a more sinister development. Thus in the Eastern Cape, seven prominent members of the UDF either disappeared or were assassinated between May and July 1985. It is all too easy for such assassinations to be dealt with under the rubric of black-on-black violence. These assassinations, which may or may not have anything to do with conflict in the townships, undoubtedly contribute to the further disorganization of the community, and such disorganization of the community is essentially what vigilante activity is about. A disorganized and cowed community provides a vacuum for community councils, development boards or homeland authorities to

fill and on which they may impose their will. This is so particularly for black communities who are without access to direct political power and who have only organization as their weapon.

COMMUNITY COUNCILS AND THE STATE

The bands of conservative right-wing township residents that have mushroomed in numerous black townships in South Africa, have uniformly been called 'vigilantes' by residents and the popular press alike. They have generally come to be associated with a right-wing response to popular and anti-apartheid urban organizations. In general, their victims have felt powerless against the vigilantes because of a perceived relationship between such organizations and the police. Detailed case studies and photographs reveal a pattern of extra-legal violence which has terrorized community organizations and their leaders, even causing these leaders to flee the area. This section concentrates on the conservative vigilantes, usually associated with community councils, the officially-sanctioned form of municipal authority, who appear to have direction as well as a coherent form of organization. Vigilantes have usually emerged in smaller townships where there has been coherent popular resistance. This in turn has been provoked by harsh conditions of living, and the policies of 'separate development' and occasionally aimed at police and township councillors, as local representatives of the apartheid system. To place the emergence of these vigilantes in context, it is necessary to recreate the crisis in South Africa's townships.

Dating back to pre-apartheid South Africa, it had been the policy of various governments to house blacks in the urban areas in racially segregated townships. These townships became shanty towns or tracts of uniform sub-economic housing, which reflected (and still do) the gross discrepancy between white affluence and black poverty.

After the Nationalist Party was elected to power in 1948, the policy of separate development became rigorously defined and elaborated. Throughout the 1950's and 1960's this policy was premised on the belief that blacks would exercise their political rights in the impoverished homelands. Indeed, as has been explained, by the leading ideologues, blacks were to be regarded as temporary sojourners, ministering to the needs of the white community and their numbers were to be kept to a minimum. The consequences of this policy for township planning was that the government froze the building of new houses in the townships and limited or neglected the supply of essential services (see A Chaskalson and S Duncan *Influx Control* Carnegie Conference Paper

No 81 SALDRU (1984). The townships became and still are, hopelessly overcrowded. They are characterized by enormous waiting lists for new houses or such houses as become available through vacancy. Housing was deliberately used as an instrument to limit the black urban population.

The civil unrest which spread outward from Soweto in 1976 drew sharp attention to the appalling conditions prevailing in the townships. A belated and half-hearted attempt was made to upgrade the urban ghettos in a limited way — to provide more and better quality housing, to introduce services such as electricity. The first moves were also made towards the end of that decade, through the Riekert Commission, to reform the system of influx control, the infamous 'pass laws' which controlled the flow of population from the homelands and white farms into the towns. The intention was to give those who already qualified to be in the townships more secure residence rights.

While talk of reforming the pass laws went ahead in the early '80's, the actual pace of resettling people from the urban and rural parts of 'white' South Africa into the homelands increased. Only minor concessions were made: to allow migrant workers to qualify after many years unbroken employment as permanent township residents and to bring their families to the cities; and to allow 'qualified' urban residents to move from one town to another.

Even these concessions were undercut by the lack of housing — which had become more severe in the post-'76 period — and by high unemployment, which economists were arguing had become a permanent feature of the economy rather than a symptom of cyclical ups and downs. The townships remained deprived ghettos, many of them quite untouched by schemes to provide electricity, sanitation, tarred roads and recreational facilities.

Originally individual municipalities were entrusted with the development of local townships. But from 1971 the central government took on this responsibility and established a countrywide network of regional black administration boards. These boards were responsible for such matters as housing development and administration, registration of workers under the pass laws, inspection of homes and work places for pass law offenders and general township development. Their role in administering and policing the pass laws made them particularly unpopular in the townships.

The municipalities and later the administration boards worked hand-in-glove with black advisory committees established in 1961 — the Urban Bantu Councils. The old UBC's, like the present day councils,

became targets for community rage in times of civil unrest — as for instance in 1976 when members of the ‘Useless Boys’ Clubs’ were attacked and alternative community structures, such as the Soweto Committee of 10 and Soweto Civic Association were born.

Further proposals for the ‘reform’ of influx control, the administration boards and the community councils surfaced in the early 1980’s. These were to become known as the ‘Koornhof Bills’ and to provoke bitter debate through all shades of liberal and more radical opinion.

The first of the Bills to become law was the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982 which upgraded community councils to township or village councils, which were to be self-financing autonomous local authorities. In the case of township councils, certain executive functions were guaranteed by law and not delegated as had been the case with community councils. Among the more suspect provisions was that town councils could have fully fledged municipal police forces, provided that the Minister of Law and Order concurred and that they did not operate to the exclusion of the South African Police.

But the major question mark against these councils was that they were to be self-financing and that their financial resources at the outset were no more extensive than licensing fees and house rentals and service charges levied on their sub-economic townships. Many saw the Act as a retrogressive step.

‘When Soweto was part of the municipal area of Johannesburg, and other townships were part of the municipal areas of other white towns, black people had no representation on the municipal councils. But money collected in rates on buildings and land in white areas as well as rents from the black townships all went to the municipality and money from the municipality was used for all the people — black and white. Because black people had no representation on the municipal councils much more money was spent in the white townships than in the black townships. But the situation was better than it is now’ observed Mrs Sheena Duncan, president of the women’s anti-apartheid group, the Black Sash.

During the inter regnum of the administration boards, the costs of administering townships were partly off-set by the profits the boards made on sorghum beer sales and the levies they charged employers for their registered workers. The new councils never had similar sources of income.

The second law to emerge from the trilogy of Bills was the Black Communities Development Act of 1984, which trimmed the powers of administration boards commensurately with the expanded powers of township councils. It channelled development board activities into the establishment and development of townships.

It was the third of the Bills which immediately made the Koornhof trilogy infamous — the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black

Persons Bill, which became known as the 'Genocide Bill'. The name stemmed from the proposed tightening of influx control so that those in the overcrowded unproductive homelands would be frozen out of the urban areas forever.

Even the Urban Foundation expressed total opposition to the Orderly Movement Bill and claimed to be instrumental in having it sent back for redrafting. The revised version has yet to be published.

The Koornhof trilogy was however tainted beyond recovery and the United Democratic Front, formed in August 1983 to oppose the reform of apartheid by the co-option of coloured and Indian South Africans, stated its two primary aims to be: opposing the new constitution which provided for a racial tricameral Parliament excluding black participation, and opposing the Koornhof Bills.

The kinds of arguments used by the United Democratic Front (UDF) are illustrated by an extract from the November 1983 Transvaal edition of *UDF News*:

'A vote for any person in these elections is a vote that supports these puppet councils. A vote for these puppet councils is almost certainly a vote for higher rents, more evictions and demolitions. A vote for the councils is a vote that will make the Government stronger. This will help them to keep on with apartheid, bantu education, the dompass and low wages. A vote for the councils is a vote that will tell the government we are happy for them to keep taking away our rights and putting us under the bantustans.'

Great emphasis was placed on the fact that residents would have to pay to maintain their townships which had been so badly neglected for years by the central government. The building of civic organizations was presented as the alternative to supporting councils: 'Our civic organizations are democratic because we decide to form them. The community councils have been formed by the government and pushed onto us.'

When 29 new local authorities were created in November/December 1983 coucillors walked unopposed into office in four areas. In the remaining areas the official percentage poll was 21 per cent — as against 30 per cent for the old community councils elected in 1978, ((1983) 37 *Survey of Race Relations in South Africa* 257-61). In only seven areas was the official poll higher than in 1978, according to the survey.

The UDF claimed that if voters were taken as a proportion of the total adult population of the relevant areas the percentage poll would be in the region of 10 per cent.

From 1984, government spokesmen had begun intimating that the councils could be the foundation of structures for black political expression. The councils then became more negatively portrayed — as urban equivalents of the homeland rulers.

The political message condemning community councillors as 'puppets' of the apartheid regime was carried forward into 1984 — again in the main by UDF affiliates — as community councils imposed the predicted rent rises on impoverished townships in a futile bid to balance the books of their 'autonomous' local authorities, as they employed their own police to act against squatters, as they evicted people from their homes, as they participated in talks on removals.

It was in this context, rather than in straightforward political campaigning, that physical attacks on councillors and on their property were launched by angry crowds of residents. Attacks on policemen's homes became commonplace at a much later stage of the current resistance, after fatal clashes between police and residents had become common place and mass arrests and detentions had become the order of the day.

Political reservations about community councils and the councillors would not have touched ordinary residents had not the worsening economic situation in South Africa forced residents into direct conflict with the community councils. The community councillors have been widely categorized as an urban elite. A disproportionate number of them own or aspire to own businesses and shops in the black urban areas. Allegations of corruption levelled at community councillors have been numerous and widespread. It is thus not surprising that in September 1984, civil unrest commenced with a protest march against the rent increases imposed by community council at Sebokeng. As a result, several people, including two community councillors, were killed on that fateful third of September. Unrest spread from the PWV-Free State area to the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. In nearly all these areas, the increasing role of community councillors (and police) in administering these deprived areas, and the material benefits they enjoyed as a consequence, were identified as one of the problems and pressure of various kinds was placed upon them to resign. At one stage in 1985, only four of the twenty-two councils in the Transvaal were functioning. No doubt, some resigned out of fear of violence or even death. The community councils were caught between political unpopularity, and economic unviability. As one commentator said: 'An unpopular body cannot expect residents to pay for their own oppression' (*SASPU National* 1985).

Civic organizations have increasingly come to represent the aspirations of the residents. As they took up issues and were successful in combatting increases in rents and other service charges, the community councils were marginalized. The credibility of the councils,

low as it was in 1983, has continued to plummet. The popular civic organizations have achieved what the paid councillors were unable or unwilling to achieve. Shown up as frauds, the councillors have been compelled to go on the offensive against their rivals. Because of their structural impotence to obtain 'results', the offensive has meant in the cases studied below, a physical assault on the persons and organizations that have exposed them.

It was not only community councillors who wished to continue in office. The new government thrust in 'reforming' the policy of separate development depended on their existence. Community councillors had been easy to deal with when negotiating the removal of townships. They had also been compliant in dealing with the eviction of squatters and they had raised rents when asked to do so. When the vigilantes began to emerge in force in 1985, the persons and groups they directed their attention towards were persons opposed, not merely to the community councils per se, but involved in the hard issues of removal, rents, schooling, transport and inadequate housing. The attacks on these leaders have not so much boosted community councils, as paved the way for the policies pursued by the development boards or the government departments administering blacks in the area. In this regard it is worth noting that the vigilante targets have often overlapped with those of the security police.

The four communities studied below reveal much of what has been described hence. In Leandra, the Leandra Action Committee, under the leadership of charismatic Chief Mayisa and Abel Nkabinde has been crippled by vigilante terror in a way which neither the police nor the intrigues of the development board could achieve in five years of conflict. In Huhudi, the same pattern is evident. What the Huhudi case also reveals is that the Huhudi Civic Association has also had to endure the attentions (and detentions) of the security police. The close relationship between the vigilantes and members of the South African Police (SAP) or the development board/community council is abundantly evident in Fort Beaufort and Thabong respectively.

Residents cannot be forced to support a community council acting against its interests. Nor can the police administer a township. Community councillors obviously have found themselves in a position where formal agencies of the state cannot guarantee popularity or continued position. The police, limited by law and by the publicity which inevitably follows extra-legal conduct, are unable to perform the function of terrorizing groups and coercing consent to the ambitions of the community councillors. The community councillors, now associated

with vigilantes, have resorted to their private armies which they have either hoped or trusted would be sanctioned or tolerated by the authorities.

THABONG'S A-TEAM

The Welkom township of Thabong was terrorized by a vigilante gang, known variously as the 'Phakathis' and the 'A-Team', who meted out arbitrary assaults and severe floggings to residents. They killed three young people during their reign of terror between February and June 1985 and lost four of their members in revenge killings.

The central concern of the vigilantes, who allegedly included several township councillors and made use of the property of the council, seemed to be to 'clean up' organized resistance to apartheid. But they soon cast their net well beyond supporters of resistance organizations. The vigilantes came to be known variously as the 'Phakathis' or the 'A-Team'. The latter name has surfaced as the name which vigilantes have chosen in several areas and appears to relate to a popular television programme.

The Background

Welkom, a gold-mining town some 250 kms south of Johannesburg in the heart of Free State farmland, was the improbable scene of some of the earliest stirrings in the current wave of student protest. The action, which began in July 1984, was initially restricted to a class boycott at one of the four high schools. But this flared into two days of arson and stoning when police stepped in to break the boycott. A crippled youth, Papiki Loape, was shot dead by police on the second day of open conflict — one of the few 'unrest victims' to fall before the Vaal uprising of 3 September which heralded a huge surge of fatalities. Sporadic violence and disruption of classes continued throughout the rest of 1984 and 1985 in Thabong. School exams were not written at the end of these years.

Young people were at the forefront of political mobilization in Thabong, which featured a fledgling branch of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and a recently formed youth organization at the time of the first protests. Adult support for the youth waxed and waned and there has been insufficient support to date for the launching of a permanent civic organization.

Parents rallied behind pupils when early resistance reaped arrests requiring large amounts of bail. Their sympathy for the young grew during the reign of the 'Phakathis' and was expressed most openly soon

after publicity and legal work put the gang out of business. But inter-generational solidarity dropped sharply in early 1986 when many older people — some willingly and others reluctantly — became involved in a violent effort to drive pupils back to school.

The Rise of the Phakathis

In February 1985 the vigilantes claimed their first life — that of Teboho Bakopane (15), who was shot during an assault by a group of armed men who attacked the group of youths that included Teboho. In May, Sello Mofokeng (15) was also shot dead — allegedly by a councillor operating with the Phakathis. He and some friends were doing their homework at home when the gang entered the house and chased the boys through a window. The councillor then fired shots at them as they ran up the street. At the end of May a third youth, Daniel Phule Mabenyane (17), died in a Welkom provincial hospital five days after he had been taken from outside his home to the infamous room 29 of the community council's headquarters, the Philip Smit Centre, and flogged until he bled profusely.

Another man (Lefulebe Ishmael Rakometsi) sjambokked that night, recalled Daniel Mabenyane on Sunday evening at the Philip Smit Centre:

'He had been assaulted and was bleeding from his buttocks. He was half-naked in that his trousers were down round his knees — but he had a shirt on. The shirt was bloody. He was tired and could not speak.'

This witness said that he, Daniel and one other were taken by the Phakathis to the police station. 'At the police station Daniel was left lying on the cement floor in the charge office behind the counter. He was still bleeding. He only spoke when he wanted water.' Daniel was allegedly taken to hospital at about 15h00 on the Monday. He died there on the Friday. His father, Mr Teboho Joseph Mabenyane, made a statement for submission to the Attorney-General that a policeman had been present when the vigilantes first threatened and beat Daniel outside his home. 'In the presence of the policeman, the vigilantes started beating Daniel and shouting at him.' The boy was unable to tell his father what had happened. 'In my presence the vigilantes then told my son they were going to beat him before they took him to the police station. A policeman was present throughout this episode.'

Commenting on the fatal attack on Daniel Mabenyane in May, police said: 'He was arrested, together with other men, by security guards. All three had injuries and were taken to hospital on the day of their arrest' (*Star* 20 June 1985).



Youth sjambokked by Thabong vigilantes.
(Courtesy of *Aljazeera*)

Police have denied Mr Mabenyane's allegation. 'There is no evidence to indicate that the police were present when the deceased was allegedly assaulted or [that they] condoned the incident' (*Star* 20 June 1985). Mr Mabenyane found his son next day 'lying on the concrete floor of the charge office [with] one blanket covering him. I went to my son and pulled off the blanket. His body was covered in wounds. He could not speak to me and he was trembling and shivering.'

Johannesburg pathologist, Dr Jonathan Gluckman, represented the family at Daniel's post-mortem. He commented: 'Daniel had been savagely beaten, with weals and bruises extending from his upper back to mid-calf. Much of the surface of the skin had broken down and become infected. This eventually resulted in probable septicaemia, with pneumonia and general organ failure, leading to death' (*Star* 20 June 1985).



The vigilantes and a local Development Board combi in Thabong.
(Courtesy of Afrapix)

Scores of others were seriously injured by the Phakathis. According to the dossier of statements submitted to the Attorney-General, Mr Simon Shasana (35) was beaten so severely that he was still in hospital a month later and was still unable to walk. Mr Nelson Mnyembane (30) was shot when he tried to stop the gangsters beating his face. Mr Paulus Aupa Mohobane (24) developed epilepsy after a sjambokking session in room 29 of the Philip Smit Centre. Days after the assault his body was

crossed with more than 100 weals and lacerations, many of them raw and festering. Mr Augustinos Thabo Ramatsa (25), beaten outside his home with kierries and sjamboks, suffered a severe injury to his 'good' eye. He had already lost the sight of the other eye during an assault in 1978. Godfrey Thula (4) had his leg broken when vigilantes burst into his home searching for his brothers. Several other members of the family had head wounds which required stitching. The victims attempted to lay charges, but police informed them in writing that they had decided against prosecution.

Hundreds of other residents suffered lesser injuries especially after the Phakathis decided to impose a curfew.

Residents insisted that the Phakathis were a weapon wielded by the Thabong town council. In the dossier submitted to the Attorney-General, seven councillors, including the mayor, Dr E B Tlali, were said to have participated in various assaults. Others were said to be jobless local residents and Zulu-speaking men recruited from far afield. Residents also point to a set of meetings between councillors and local businessmen in which Dr Tlali is recorded as saying:

'Under the guidance of council members patrols were organized and inspired by the old axiom. "Spare the rod and spoil the child". All meetings of potential stone-throwers and arsonists were broken up with no more than the energetic use of sjamboks and the result has been most satisfying. Thabong has been scourged of rowdyism and we intend to keep it that way' (*Sunday Star* 9 June 1985).

Town clerk, Mr James Ngake, initially denied links between the council and the Phakathis, ascribing the action to thugs taking advantage of disorder in the township (*Star* 31 May 1985). Faced with more specific allegations about the use of the Philip Smit Centre and council-controlled vehicles in vigilante attacks, he refused to comment.

Mr Scheepers, Chief Director of the Southern Free State Development Board, steered carefully clear of committing himself on the matter. He acknowledged that the Philip Smit complex and vehicles allegedly used by the Phakathis were nominally owned by the board but added that they were effectively controlled by the council (*Sunday Star* 9 June 1985).

Police have acknowledged the involvement of 'security guards' and 'councillors and their assistants' in several incidents. They seem to be referring to the same people residents describe as the Phakathis. Captain Fouche added that councillors used development board vehicles to patrol the township 'because their houses are attacked all the time'.

Residents claimed that Mr Nyimbane was one of the three people shot and severely injured when the councillor and several vigilantes

made an unprovoked attack on people gathered at the home of Mr Moffat Khasane (*Star* 2 April 1985).

After the death of Sello Mofokeng, residents organized the customary vigil at the family home, an event which ended in the largest single clash with vigilantes. No less than thirteen statements submitted to the Attorney-General's office described the onslaught by men armed with pangas, sjamboks, kierries and guns as unprovoked. Several victims said they were taken to the police station by the vigilantes. Some were taken from there to hospital. Others spent a night at the police station before being sent home next day.

The police version of events is that: 'Councillors and their assistants brought 85 persons to the Thabong Police Station. Of the 85, 66 persons were suffering from injuries allegedly sustained when councillors dispersed an illegal gathering at the home of the dead man, Poposi (Sello) Mofokeng. During the dispersal one councillor, Albert Phateta, was stabbed several times and his assistant, John Mahula, was stoned and beaten to death, allegedly by members of the illegal gathering' (*Star* 20 June 1985). It appears that the councillor's name should read Albert Phakathi, as residents make corroborating statements that he was seen at hospital that night.

By the end of September police were investigating two cases of murder, three charges of attempted murder and 56 charges of assault arising from the vigilante terror in Thabong (*Star* 30 September 1985). The only person known to have appeared in court is Mr Phakathi, who is charged with murder. The investigations were commenced after lawyers for the victims had by-passed the police and submitted a dossier directly to the Attorney-General, making personal representation to his deputy.

For the second half of 1985 Thabong was free of vigilante action, but fears of a revival were kindled in January 1986 when some sjambok-wielding parents and elders launched a violent attempt to get children back into school uniforms and behind their desks. The council, which by this time had an official law enforcement unit, was said to be actively organizing adults to beat up children.

Although the education authorities denied it, pupils alleged they were beaten up inside the classroom of certain schools — and displayed sjambok weals and cuts to support their claims. South African Police denied any involvement and Mayor Tlali said merely that any parent had the right to discipline his or her child. Youths claimed a few of the old Phakathis were in action again during the back-to-school drive.

The action against pupils exhausted itself within two days and Thabong pupils returned to school of their own volition at the end of



Thabong youth blinded by a vigilante assault which damaged his one good eye.
(Courtesy of Afrapix)

January in accordance with the decision taken by the consultative conference on education at the University of the Witwatersrand the previous month.

Other Free State Vigilantes

At least three other townships in the Northern Free State are known to have been subjected to a degree of vigilante violence. They are Tumahole, near Parys; Seeisoville at Kroonstad; and the township at Virginia. In Tumahole, which was the first of the Orange-Vaal area townships to erupt into violence over rent increases in July 1984, the vigilante gang is also known as the 'A-Team'. It is alleged to cluster around a certain member of the police force, her family and friends and to aim its attacks specifically at anti-apartheid activists.

Since the early rent protests there has been sustained activity by anti-apartheid groups and a growth of trade union representation. The authorities failed to break the rent boycott; a consumer boycott of white shops was launched in response to local grievances and sustained for several weeks; and protests have surfaced concerning educational issues and detentions.

At least five people have lost their lives in political violence in Tumahole and residents view at least two other deaths as unrest-related. There has been sporadic mob violence in the township, with official vehicles, and the property of councillors, policemen and officials being targeted.

In November 1985 the A-Team claimed the life of youth activist Lefu Rasego (17), hunting him down, dragging him from a house where he had hidden and hacking him to death with garden implements. His death was witnessed by several other activists.

Vigilantes are also alleged to have been responsible for the stoning and burning of the homes of three community leaders in September and October. On the night of the second of these attacks, shots were said to have been fired from the home of a policewoman allegedly sighted at the scene of the first attack.

Throughout November, residents alleged, activists' homes were stoned, their families threatened, primary school children assaulted. On 13 January two youths were reported to have been shot and injured in separate incidents.

In Kroonstad's township of Seeisoville, where looting and arson flared briefly but fiercely in February 1985 and three lives were lost, three community councillors are alleged to have made an attempt on the life of key UDF activist, Mr Dennis Bloem. An attempt by Mr Bloem to



Victim of a combined assault by parents and vigilantes in Thabong in January 1986.
(Courtesy of *The Star*)

obtain a Supreme Court order to restrain the three men from further harassing and harming him failed. In papers before the court, the three councillors denied shooting at Mr Bloem but said that they carried firearms to assist in the maintenance of law and order in the township. Mr Bloem's home and shop were thrice petrol bombed.

In Virginia it is alleged that parents and vigilantes combined forces early in 1986 to get the children back into school on the official opening day rather than on the later date proposed by pupils' organizations. Pupils who fled the area said their classmates had been beaten back to school and that such close surveillance of school premises was kept that pupils were in risk of being beaten if they so much as went on errands.

HUCA VERSUS THE COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Introduction

The study of 'vigilante' organization in Huhudi reveals even more clearly than Leandra, Fort Beaufort and Thabong, that the catalyst for this right-wing organized violence is the emergence of popular and effective community organizations. The target of the Huhudi vigilantes was the Huhudi Civic Association, the body that not only took the lead in opposing apartheid policies but also became the effective voice of the community. The officially instituted community council became marginalized and then threatened.

Background

The township of Huhudi houses approximately 15 000 people. It lies next to Vryburg, a town in the hot, dry, Northern Cape. The whites are predominantly conservative farmers, who carry with them traditional and unchallenged racist attitudes which is reflected in the support that the far-right white political party have in the area.

In 1970 the South African government first announced its intention to resettle the entire community of Huhudi 55 kms away in a resettlement village in Bophuthatswana called Pudimoe. Huhudi residents resisted the removal for fourteen years, battling against various pressures structured to compel them to move to Pudimoe in Bophuthatswana. A freeze was imposed on the provision of new houses and on the maintenance and improvement of existing homes.

The Huhudi community council, a body nominated by the government in 1977 to run the township, opposed the removal but was considered ineffective. As a result a number of the residents of Huhudi met and democratically elected a civic association, HUCA (Huhudi

Civic Association), to contest the removal of the township. HUCA was formally launched on 28 May 1983. It immediately stepped up media coverage on the removal and obtained legal support. HUCA took up a variety of civic issues but particularly the refusal to allow the renovation of houses. They commenced campaigning amongst local businessmen, government officials and the newspapers concerning the intended removal of Huhudi.

On 15 October 1984, Huhudi was reprieved from the intended removal. The civic association regarded the reprieve with some suspicion, declaring the decision to be 'only one chip off the rock'. This caution was echoed by Progressive Federal Party MP, Mr Peter Soal, who noted that a proviso to the reprieve was that Huhudi, which was already overcrowded, could not expand beyond its present boundaries (*Star* 17 October 1984).

HUCA immediately set about projects designed to help residents secure their homes on the terms implied by the reprieve — assisting them to make their homes habitable and to prove their urban residence rights.

HUCA then devoted its energies to the daily problems of Huhudi residents. The community council was increasingly marginalized in the face of the energetic approach of HUCA activists. The civic association commenced a brick-making project to help people repair houses that had fallen into disrepair over the previous fourteen years. It also established a legal advice office to deal with pension problems, urban residence rights applications and labour problems. HUCA established contact with urban trade unions, and lent support to the initiation of unions in the Vryburg district. In 1983 HUCA affiliated to the UDF and UDF speakers attended the HUCA rallies. HUCA increasingly drew parallels faced by the Huhudi community and the broader problems faced by blacks in South Africa. It had begun to speak out against community councillors, arguing that the community council structure was a poor substitute for effective political rights. By 1985 HUCA had managed to establish its political credentials as a result of its concrete gains on civic issues. For instance, at a vigil held on the eve of the crucial government talks on the Huhudi removal, Mr Galeng told more than 1000 people that although the community council would be present at the talks the real representatives of Huhudi had been left outside. 'We are like people who are waiting for the judge to come and pass sentence on us for crimes. But the Huhudi residents have not committed any crimes.'

Mr Galeng added that, if the community councillors agreed that

'illegal' persons and those in condemned houses should be compelled to leave Huhudi, HUCA would fight this. He insisted that the 'abolition of apartheid and not cosmetic changes was needed to solve their problems (Star 15 October 1984).

During October 1985, two members of the HUCA executive were detained by the South African Police in terms of s 29 of the Internal Security Act. They had not been released by February 1986. Other members of HUCA became aware of increased police attention and harassment. In response they decided to expand the sub-committees to include young and old and thus encompass more residents in HUCA. It was at this point that community council opposition to HUCA became evident. On 16 June a community councillor drove his car into a crowd of people returning from a HUCA rally severely injuring a school girl. Shortly afterwards supporters of HUCA had their houses stoned by a group of persons who became referred to as the 'vigilantes'. Some of these vigilantes were identified as relatives of two community councillors. On 10 November, Mr Hoffman Galeng, chairman of HUCA and Northern Cape president of the UDF, was threatened by a brother of a community councillor. The matter was reported to the police, but as yet no action has been taken. Later it was reported that a group of vigilantes invaded Galeng's house and attacked his dogs. Incidents of vigilante activity against HUCA members intensified in late November 1985. On Sunday, 24 November, a group of people leaving a HUCA meeting were allegedly attacked by vigilantes. Several HUCA supporters were taken into the shop of a community councillor and assaulted. Two activists, Isaac Peloeng and Florence Nkosi, were hospitalized as a result. They were allegedly taken to hospital in a police van, placed under police guard and on discharge, they were taken to police cells. Both alleged that they were forced to sign statements they disagreed with and were charged with public violence. Eliah Galeng, brother of Hoffman Galeng, was attacked in the yard of Hoffman's house. The Galeng dog was shot dead and vigilantes stoned the house. Eliah allegedly ran out to defend the house as the vigilantes attacked him with a pick. A police Landrover arrived and a policeman is alleged to have asked the vigilantes whether Eliah was the 'King' — apparently mistaking him for Hoffman Galeng. Eliah was then allegedly dragged to the Landrover and taken to hospital where he was held under police guard. The vigilantes were not charged. Eliah Galeng was kept under police guard in hospital until 28 November. He was allegedly refused access to legal representatives by a Major Botha of the Vryburg police. The police are also alleged to have requested Eliah's doctor to discharge



A victim of an attack by Huhudi vigilantes
(Courtesy of *Afrapix*)

him as they needed a statement from him, giving assurances that they would not arrest the patient on his discharge. No sooner had he been discharged, than he was arrested and charged with public violence. Eliah claims he made a statement to the police who refused to read it back to him before he signed it.

On 25 November, the vigilantes allegedly attacked a group of youths who scattered. A 17-year-old boy, Sylvester 'Mr Ref' Casebue hid in a nearby house. Vigilantes threatened the occupant with a gun until she admitted that the boy was inside. Sylvester was dragged out and shot dead. A newspaper report paraphrased a witness's account of the killing as follows:

'The vigilantes dragged "Mr Ref" from the house, beat him with spears and assegais, then fired two shots into him at point-blank range. One of the smaller vigilantes then dumped a rock on the young man's head as he lay on the ground' (*Star* 27 November 1985).

An eye-witness living across the street gave lawyers a clear account of the incident. His statement was handed to the police. The witness was later taken by the police and pressed to change his statement. He later confessed to a Black Sash field worker that he had changed his statement. The names of two of the alleged assassins were handed to the police but no action has been taken against them.

The killing of 'Mr Ref' signalled a wave of counter-violence by youths. Police reported that a young girl was killed and a man injured when they were doused with petrol. Stoning and petrol bombing also occurred according to police, who said they shot and killed a youth during one such attack (*Star* 28 November 1985).

The following day, November 26, the homes of Francis Lunden and Hoffman Galeng, both executive members of HUCA, were burnt to the ground by vigilantes. Four women in the Galeng home were held in a corner of the yard and forced to witness the vigilantes pour petrol over the house and set it alight. Mr Galeng and four boys were inside. Three, including Mr Galeng, escaped without injury. The fourth was badly burnt and a fifth, Thomas Seitsang, was hacked with pangas in front of the women as he dashed out of the house. His body was later found in the mortuary with three bullets in it. Mr Galeng rushed to the police station during the fire, and the police took approximately half an hour to arrive at the scene. Advocates took statements from witnesses — four women, two boys and Mr Galeng. These statements were handed to the police, who told witnesses to come later and sign the statements. Only three were allowed to sign the statements and the others were turned away. Mr Galeng was told to come and sign the statement regarding the attack on his brother Eliah, but each time he went he was told to come

the following day. He did this for five days and then began to feel the police were keeping him in Huhudi by delaying him. Fearing for his life, he fled Huhudi for Johannesburg. On 21 January he was detained in Johannesburg in terms of s 29 of the Internal Security Act. On 27 November the house of the only community councillor considered to be sympathetic to HUCA was attacked. He too laid charges at the police station and the names of ten vigilantes were handed to the police in Vryburg. No action has been taken against any of these. Two weeks later, after a spate of events, a Vryburg policeman told a Black Sash field worker that to his knowledge none of the victim's statements identified any of the vigilantes and that is why they have not been able to proceed with prosecutions. An attorney representing the victims approached the Attorney-General of the Northern Cape about the failure of the police to act against the vigilantes. He informed her that he had no authority over the police and redirected her to the Commissioner of Police. The police, meanwhile, have imposed an informal curfew in Huhudi. Residents fear that if they are found in the streets after 18h00 they may be assaulted by the police. Restrictions were placed on the funeral of Sylvester Gasebue on 7 December, and police arrested 30 people claiming the T-shirts they wore were unlawful banners. Since these events, several people have been assaulted by vigilantes and have fled Huhudi. Both those who fled and those who remain have lost faith in the protective capacity of the law and in particular of the police. Black Sash field workers have received complaints that police have refused to take statements from people who have been assaulted by vigilantes. Some key members of HUCA have not left the area, but are reluctant to reveal their presence. HUCA itself has been effectively crippled through vigilante action.

Whites in Vryburg are apparently fond of referring to the hot dusty area as 'the Texas of South Africa'. With its connotations of lawless communities and partisan sheriffs, the residents of the black township have begun to consider the analogy apt.

THE CONCERNED CITIZENS OF LEANDRA

Introduction

Leandra, near Secunda in the Eastern Transvaal, is a shanty town subject to urban renewal and under threat of partial removal. The removal has been effectively resisted for five years — and peacefully fought until the end of 1984. Vigilantes entered the picture only in December 1985 when anti-removal protests had reaped the first loss of

lives and an angered community had begun to turn against local policemen and community councillors. As in Huhudi, it was those who had taken a lead in resisting the authorities who firstly became the acknowledged leaders of the community — acknowledged even by the police and the development board — and secondly became the target of vigilante violence. The Leandra study also shows how the assault on the Leandra Action Committee not only paved the way for the community council to assert itself — but also served the interests of that council's backers — the development board anxious to deal with a more pliant community.

Background

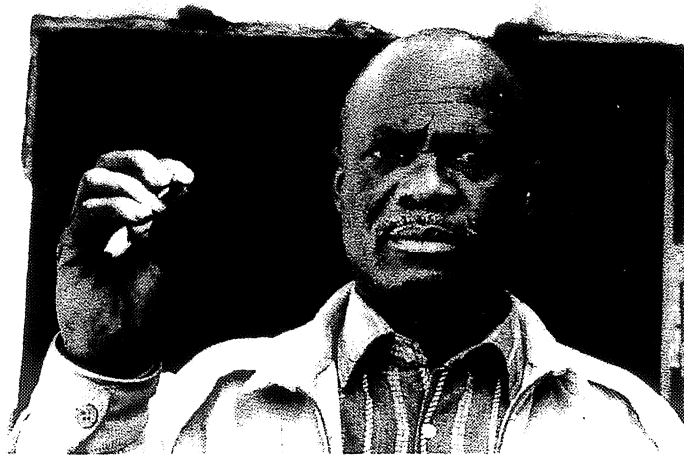
Residents say the population of Leandra exceeds 18 000 while official estimates are in the region of 12 000. Black people gained freehold title to the land at Leandra around 1909, but in the 1970's their property was expropriated by the municipality and thereafter residents began paying rent to public authorities. Only in 1981 was Leandra township officially acknowledged and declared a 'prescribed area' — that is a black urban area.

In the same year residents received leaflets advising them to go and live in the homelands but there were few indications that they might be forcibly removed until 1983 when the renewal scheme for the township was announced (*Star* 24 August 1983).

Initially the scheme provided for the construction of only 712 homes — far too few to accommodate all the residents. This, coupled with a letter from the administration board to the township's advisory council stating that the central government would liaise with the KwaNdebele Chief Minister to organize the relocation of 'his subjects on a voluntary basis', triggered immediate fears of forced removal.

The Leandra Action Committee (LAC) was formed in 1981 in reaction to the first hint of removal. After a mass meeting in the township about 60 people presented themselves at the administration board offices to register their opposition to removal. Board officials allegedly suggested residents form a committee to facilitate discussion and the LAC was launched.

From its inception the LAC was primarily concerned with opposing the proposed removal. But gradually it took on the role of broader community representation, replacing the officially sanctioned but unrepresentative community council. Within months of the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in August 1983, the LAC had become an affiliate of the UDF. Its chairman, Mr Abel Nkabinde, was



Chief Ampie Mayisa in September 1983, before his death at the hands of Leandra vigilantes, displays a cartridge of a bullet he claimed was intended for him.
(Courtesy of Lesley Lawson)



The home of Leandra Action Committee leader, Abel Nkabinde, after an attack on it by vigilantes.
(Courtesy of *The Star*)

featured as a speaker at several rallies of the UDF.

The authorities initially displayed a reluctance to deal with the committee and to allow it to hold public meetings. The LAC managed to achieve a considerable amount of publicity for the plight of Leandra and forced a situation where the authorities were compelled to address them.

Perhaps the most charismatic figure in the LAC was Chief Ampie Mayisa, a traditional Ndebele chief who would have no truck with the homeland system but felt bound to address the day-to-day problems of the community around him. Chief Mayisa was subjected to constant harassment. He was arrested several times on charges which were non-political and, his colleagues believed, without foundation.

Chief Mayisa, who eventually lost his life in a vigilante attack, claimed that in July 1983 a policeman fired a shot at him after a row had erupted over the organization of a public meeting to discuss development plans for Leandra:

'We went through the township with a loudspeaker telling people about the meeting. Apparently someone went to the police and told them [incorrectly] we did not have permission to hold the meeting. Three policemen confronted us and an argument ensued. One policeman pointed a rifle at me and I pushed it aside. Then I heard a shot go off behind me but I was not hit' Chief Mayisa told the press a month after the event (*Star* 19 August 1983).

He showed the reporter a 9mm shell allegedly picked up at the site of the shooting. Police confirmed that a shooting incident involving the chief was being investigated. The Attorney-General, however, declined to prosecute.

Under pressure from the community and the LAC the dimensions of the removal issue began to change. At an early stage the Highveld Administration Board made it known that the initial renewal scheme of 712 homes was no longer considered adequate and the plan would have to be reconsidered (*Star* 24 August 1983). Some months later it was announced that additional sites would be made available and that therefore the majority of the community would not be removed.

At this stage the removal threat was narrowed to 116 'illegal' residents — those who allegedly failed to qualify for urban residence rights (*Star* 2 May 1984). The LAC refused to allow the community to be divided into 'legals' and 'illegals' and won from the Chief Commissioner in Pretoria a virtually unprecedented guarantee that all Leandra people — even those with the 'temporary' residential status of contract workers — would be given family accommodation in the renewal scheme. This was confirmed in writing by the Minister of Cooperation and Development in August that year (*Star* 7 August 1984).

The concession was greeted as a victory for the LAC which had also

succeeded in campaigning for reduced rents in the new housing scheme. But the LAC called the sincerity of the authorities sharply into question just two months later when it was discovered that accommodation in the new housing was limited to the permit holder. 'Lodgers' — usually the extended family of the permit holder living in the same household — were to be thrown out of their old homes, which were torn apart, and occupants were forced into small shacks at the fringe of the township (*Star* 9 October 1984).

This move against lodgers was said by the authorities to be temporary and the unserviced tract where their shacks were set up with official sanction became known as the 'waiting place'. It was the threat of eviction levelled against a few of these families in December 1985 that led to the most serious conflict between residents and police — a conflict which resulted in four deaths within hours.

This was not the first incident of street violence to occur in Leandra. In October 1984 the mayor's house was burnt and twelve people, including the LAC chairman, Mr Abel Nkabinde, were charged with public violence (*Star* 2 November 1984). About a month later the authorities bulldozed the home of an old man who had resisted expropriation more than a decade ago. Tensions mounted as a crowd gathered at the scene and finally spilled over into stoning when Chief Mayisa was loaded into a hippo and carted off to Evander where he faced charges of failing to pay certain debts — charges which he hotly disputed (*Star* 28 November 1984).

According to reporters, people had already been shot in Leandra on 19 November 1985 before officials at the Witbank headquarters of the administration board became aware that provocative notices of eviction had been issued in terms of the Squatters Act. Residents stayed away from work to defend their homes against demolition and youths took to the street before dawn erecting barricades to keep the eviction squads out (*Star* 19 November 1985, *The Weekly Mail* 22 November 1985). Four people were shot dead. 'A mother of three was allegedly shot by the owner of a cafe situated on the main road while she was trying to fetch water from the communal tap. The other three [who included a 14-year-old boy] were shot dead when they tried to attack a beerhall.' The mob which attacked the beerhall appeared to believe that police, who had 'camped' inside the building, had all departed — but some allegedly had remained inside and opened fire when the crowd attacked (*Star* 20 November 1985). The beerhall was damaged and the homes of several police and three councillors were attacked.

Hours after the deaths, LAC leaders met with the police and

organized a public meeting addressed by the police and the local commissioner. They made it clear that they would not cease resisting removals. Chief Mayisa told officials that no Leandra residents would move 'until they brought these dead people back to life' (*The Weekly Mail* 22 November 1985). Mayisa gave an assurance to the police that if they left the township there would be no violence. The police left. The area returned to peace until the burial of the victims some days later.

After the burial of the four victims, a cafe and six houses belonging to councillors and policemen were petrol-bombed. Earlier, armed youths had marched through the streets saying they wanted to root out all informers and police. They were halted by Johannesburg's Bishop Suffragan, Bishop Simeon Nkoane. In accordance with an agreement with the LAC, police had stayed out of the township until the burials were over. Chief Mayisa deplored the violence but told the parents that Leandra would not accede to a police request to hand over the alleged perpetrators of the violence. 'We do not want to do the police's dirty work', he stressed. Police would not disclose whether there was a list of 'wanted' youths. They did not acknowledge the deal with the LAC to stay out of the township and would not disclose particulars (*Star* 3 December 1985).

Within a week, twenty youths had been taken into custody and residents resolved that women and clergymen would march to the police station on Saturday 7 December to demand the release of the children. The crowd rejected a compromise negotiated by lawyers, that mothers would be allowed to visit their children provided the crowd dispersed. As the hundreds of women unfurled white peace banners and took up positions behind the line of police, the local station commander, Lieutenant L de Vries, drove up and ordered everyone to disperse. After eight minutes of ignored warnings, the police moved in with teargas. People booed the police and youths replied to the teargas with stones. Reinforcements arrived and newsmen were ordered from the scene. Running battles between police and youths ensued and local whites 'brought their families to the freeway overlooking the township'. One resident, whose eyes were stung by teargas, commented wryly that the whites had 'come to have their Saturday afternoon fun' (*Sunday Star* 8 December 1985).

Vigilante Violence

A week later police broke up a public meeting called to obtain a community mandate for proposed talks between the LAC executive and a regional police commissioner. A major motive for the talks was that,

during this period of intense conflict, the lives of LAC leaders Abel Nkabinde and Ampie Mayisa had been seriously threatened and the beginnings of a campaign against them were evident.

In the first week of December Nkabinde had been shot at by a hooded gunman who fired several times at close range. Nkabinde escaped injury but a LAC executive member, Mr Albert Mahlangu, had allegedly been hit thrice and taken to hospital (*Star* 17 December 1985). Chief Mayisa's hand required stitching after a member of the community council stabbed him with a screwdriver allegedly in the presence of the police (*Star* 17 and 18 December 1985).

These assaults on LAC leaders and other threats to LAC supporters by those who opposed their activities were raised with the divisional commissioner of police, Brigadier J van der Merwe, on 17 December. Bishop Nkoane also appealed to the Minister of Law and Order, Louis Le Grange, to intervene in the area. 'Despite the fact that I have tried to make contact with the police and also reconcile differences between groups the situation remains sensitive. The authorities are not helping to get the situation back to normal' (*Star* 18 December 1985).

Within a month the 'sensitive' situation had become a bloody one — Chief Mayisa was to be hacked to death by vigilantes who also called for the blood of Nkabinde and burnt his house. At the chief's funeral and afterwards, further violence was to erupt. The vigilantes appear to have been canvassing members in late December and in early January. Many of their number are drawn from supporters of a local football club whose owner/manager is prominent amongst the vigilantes. They called themselves 'Concerned Residents' or 'Inkatha' (although Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha has pointedly disowned them) and are said to be wholehearted supporters of the community council. Abel Nkabinde told the Pretoria Supreme Court that they 'have sought to coerce and compel by violent means, support of the council and have attempted to stifle unlawfully the dissemination of ideas and debate between lawful organizations and the council'.

The LAC and a fellow UDF-affiliate, the Mpumulelo Youth Congress (MYC), appear to have been particular targets of the vigilante group.

Abel Nkabinde described the first vigilant attack on his home on 4 January in court papers:

'I saw a group of people coming to my house and saw that they were armed with pangas, kieres and shovels. I recognized them as members of "Inkatha". They approached the house and they said they wanted to kill me. Fortunately there was a group of supporters of the LAC at my house at the time. Some of the intruders approached me with pangas and the members of my group clashed with them, whereupon they left. However, Joseph Zondo a Bishop of the Local Zionist Church, turned

back and came towards me pulling a firearm out of his trouserband. He pointed it at me. When he saw that there were too many witnesses and LAC supporters on the scene, he eventually departed.'

Mr Nkabinde then allegedly phoned the police. His statement to the Pretoria Supreme Court describes the response:

'To my astonishment, he [the policeman who took the call] told me that my would-be assailants had just been at the police office and had just left and that the police were aware that "Inkatha" wanted to burn down my house and kill me. He [the policeman] said "let them go we won't interfere". He would not accept a charge being laid, and he furthermore refused to come out to the township and at no stage did he disclose his name to me.'

Mr Nkabinde's house was burnt to the ground on 11 January 1986. He can identify thirteen of the vigilantes who were responsible for this act. He did not report the matter to the police as he felt they were not 'prepared, able or willing to offer me any assistance or protection'. Mr Nkabinde has fled Leandra and is in hiding.

The attack on the Nkabinde home came within hours of the brutal murder of Chief Mayisa, on the afternoon of 11 January. A 'graphic description of the murder of Chief Mayisa was given in court papers by somebody who was forced to join the mob. Chief Mayisa's house was surrounded by approximately 100 vigilantes and burnt to the ground. Sam Zondo was allegedly again a leading assailant and was said to have instructed his fellow vigilantes to 'look out for people trying to escape from the house'. Chief Mayisa was found hiding in a disused truck 'and the group converged on him hitting him with axes and pangas', eventually hacking him to death. Joseph Zondo then allegedly instructed his younger brother to go and fetch a bakkie to take the mutilated body to the scrapyard where it was covered with petrol and set alight.

Many of the Leandra residents believe that police inaction played an indirect role in the death of Chief Mayisa. Firstly, police failed to act against the vigilantes prior to 11 January despite the fact that the identities of various vigilantes were well-established. Secondly, the police did not do anything effective to prevent the attack on Chief Mayisa's house, although they were fully aware that the attack was taking place. The entries in the Leandra charge office register for the night of 11 January 1986 were seen by an attorney acting for the Mayisa family. He stated to the court that the first of two relevant entries was a record of a telephone call to the charge office from Chief Mayisa at 19h50 on 11 January. Chief Mayisa reported that his house was under attack and that he required police assistance. A Sergeant Ras of the Leandra uniform branch went to investigate the situation. The second entry recorded that a Sergeant Ras had reported on the situation to a



Leandra vigilantes brazenly acknowledge killing Leandra Action Committee leader,
Chief Ampie Mayisa.
(Courtesy of *The Star*)

Lieutenant Slabbert who instructed him not to enter the township but to maintain observations, the court was told.

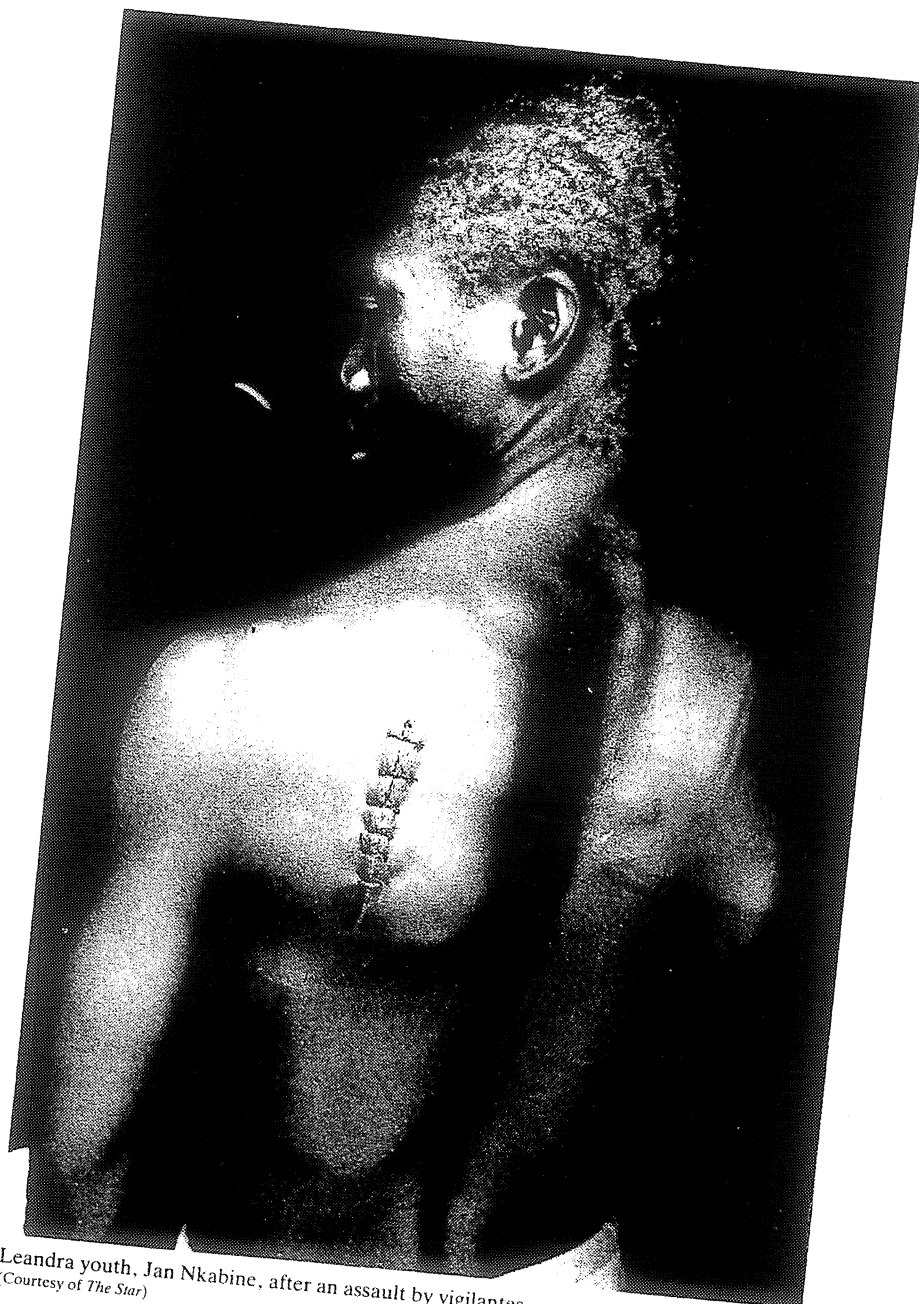
One of the scores of residents accosted by roving bands of vigilantes was Nkabinde's 15-year-old son, Jan, who is vice-chairman of the youth congress. He was first attacked on 26 December, he told the court, when a group of vigilantes stopped him and asked him if he was a member of MYC or 'Inkatha'. When he replied that he was a member of MYC, one of the vigilantes, Sphiwe Misi, punched him viciously in the face. He did not report the matter to the police as he felt that 'making a report to the police would be a hopeless exercise'. Jan Nkabinde said he was attacked again on the night of 14 January 1986. He was taken out of his grandmother's house by approximately ten vigilantes all of whom he can name. The vigilantes 'were armed with lethal weapons. For example, some had pistols, grass slashers (which were about one and a half metres long), pangas, sjamboks and axes'. They told Jan they were going to kill him because of his association with the MYC. He was dragged to the home of Aaron Zondo approximately a kilometre away. He was beaten continuously with sjamboks while being 'walked' to the house. On arrival Aaron Zondo told Jan that he was now in the office of 'Inkatha'. Aaron Zondo then instructed the other vigilantes to take Jan to the graveyard and to bury him there. Jan gave the following description of what happened in the graveyard:

My eyes were covered by someone placing his hands over them and they asked me how they should kill me. I was given three choices, namely that they either burn me, stab me or shoot me. When Joseph Zondo held a gun to my forehead they uncovered my eyes and said that I should choose in which manner I wished them to kill me. He repeated the choices. I asked for mercy and Joseph Zondo told me that I would not be left alone and that I must make my choice as I was a follower of the late Chief Mayisa.'

Jan's ordeal at the graveyard ended when one of the vigilantes, Magondi Shongwe, allegedly chopped Jan with a panga on his left shoulder blade. He was then stabbed on the back and the top of his head, and on his right arm and right shoulder blade. The vigilantes finally let him go and told him that he 'should refrain from being a member of the MYC or he would face the prospect of being burnt to death'.

Within hours of Chief Mayisa's death one of a group of vigilantes, calling themselves 'Concerned Citizens', told the press:

'We killed Mr Mayisa and we also want Mr Nkabinde dead. For a long time they have been bothering our parents with their banana politics. They are responsible for some of the youths' deaths in the township. They were responsible for some of us missing our examinations. In many cases we tried to make peace with them but when our members were alone they were attacked' (*Star* 13 January 1986).



Leandra youth, Jan Nkabine, after an assault by vigilantes.
(Courtesy of *The Star*)

On the morning after the fatal attack on Chief Mayisa, Bishop Nkoane rescued one of the chief's sons's from an attack. The Bishop said he was shocked at the attitude of the assassins 'who showed themselves so brazenly' (*Citizen* 14 January 1986).

Mr Nkabinde and several other leading LAC supporters successfully applied to the Pretoria Supreme Court a week after the killing for a temporary order restraining 23 named vigilantes from harming or harassing them. Bishop Nkoane stated to the court that he believed the evolution of rival groups in the township stemmed from the eviction bid in late 1985. He claimed that the Chief had on two occasions attempted to hold 'peace talks' but had been unsuccessful. He also said he had spoken to the office of the Minister of Law and Order and to the Deputy Divisional Commissioner of Police for the Eastern Transvaal about the growing tensions in Leandra shortly after Christmas. After the murder of the Chief he had made numerous attempts to contact the Minister and reach the police commissioner at Middelburg but had had no response to the messages he left them.

Fresh violence was triggered during the Chief's funeral. On 25 January small bands of armed vigilantes were seen near the Chief's home before the funeral procession departed and they gathered at a home along the route taken by the cortege. Later, an alleged member of the vigilantes was glimpsed near the funeral service, and was run to ground at his home by about 80 armed youths from among the mourners. The boy was hacked to death and his home stoned. He has been variously identified as Padi Motswagae and Petrus Magomotsha.

The funeral service proceeded uneasily but without interruption in the community school until about ten minutes after the murder when a group of about 50 vigilantes, armed with pangas, clubs and dustbin-lid 'shields', attacked the mourners. Youths from the funeral crowd joined in hand-to-hand battle with the vigilantes to drive them off. An armoured vehicle drew up within sight of the battle but police did not intervene to stop the fighting.

After the burial, which took place at a rural graveyard outside Leandra, according to affidavits laid before the Supreme Court, the law of the jungle took over as residents attacked each other and hundreds of youths hurriedly left the township. Mobs of vigilantes attacked mourners returning from the funeral. Guns were fired by a number of vigilantes. A bullet penetrated one youth's body and exited at his side, leaving what did not appear to be a serious injury. A young schoolgirl was chased by vigilantes who chopped her with pangas, leaving her for dead. The unconscious girl was rushed to hospital as was a youth with a



Leandra vigilantes closing in on a stone-wielding mourner at the funeral of Chief Mayisa.
(Courtesy of Afroipia)

badly torn face. Several youths were allegedly abducted by vigilantes (*Sunday Star* 25 and 26 January 1986).

At this stage the court interdict restraining the vigilantes from attacking Leandra residents was supposed to be in force. Nkabinde brought a second application, this time asking for the vigilantes to be committed to prison for contempt of court in view of their flagrant disregard of the first interdict.

In a replying affidavit, Mr Jacob Motsogae, one of those alleged to be a vigilante, denied that the group assaulted or attacked LAC supporters. He said he belonged to a soccer club whose members were repeatedly attacked by LAC supporters. Mr Motsogae said LAC supporters were only injured when soccer club members tried to defend themselves. The matter was postponed to allow both parties to file further affidavits (*Star* 21 February 1986).

In the court action, Mr Nkabinde alleged that most of the men subject to a restraining court order had been involved in attacking LAC supporters and that they should be jailed for contempt of court.

He alleged that twice on the day of the funeral police had been in full view of vigilantes holding their weapons at the ready and had failed to restrain them or remove their weapons. 'It was quite evident to me that the police condoned the fact that the respondents held these weapons openly' he said.

A 13-year-old youth, Fasco Nkosi, filed an affidavit stating that he had been halted by a group of about 35 vigilantes while walking in the street on the eve of the funeral:

'The thirteenth respondent (Sipho Radebe) pointed a gun at me and told me to stand still. He asked me where Bishop Nkoane was as they wanted to shoot the bishop. I took the threat seriously and I firmly believed that my life was in danger. I desperately tried to explain to the thirteenth respondent that I did not know where the bishop was. Certain of the people accompanying the thirteenth respondent for no reason assaulted me and I was then taken to the Leandra Police Station.

At the Leandra Police Station the thirteenth respondent made an allegation that I had assaulted a girl by the name of Qenid Mnguni by using an axe. I denied this allegation emphatically. While I was in the charge office I noticed a certain policeman, Mlungwana Dhlamini, hand the thirteenth respondent a gun. It looked like a police service revolver. I was subsequently charged with assault and am still in police custody.'

In the days following the funeral, scores of Leandra refugees sought shelter at the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, near Roodepoort — only to be forcibly removed on 13 February by police who swooped on the church property at 06h30 using 'three helicopters and scores of armoured vehicles' (*Star* 14 February 1986). Mrs Tish White, one of the directors of Wilgespruit, described the raid: 'We heard shots outside, dogs were howling and youths screaming. The police told us to stay indoors until they had finished the operation.' It was reported that at

least three youths sustained gunshot wounds in the swoop (*Star* 14 February 1986). A police spokesman in Pretoria said that the arrests at the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre were in connection with charges stemming from unrest in Leandra. Yet as lawyers for the Mayisa family pointed out, no arrests had been made by that stage in relation to the Mayisa death.

On 18 February an urgent Supreme Court application was brought for the release of those who had been detained at Wilgespruit and were now being held at the Krugersdorp Police Station. The court refrained from ruling on the matter as the police agreed to release 42 detainees before midnight. It was further agreed that the youths — 41 of whom were under the age of 20 — would have the option of returning to Leandra or to Wilgespruit. Four of Chief Mayisa's sons were among those whose release was secured. All chose to return to Wilgespruit. Another group of 13 youths has been held at Leandra. They face various charges, including murder in some cases.

The Leandra community, which was once so unified in its resistance to the state's intended removal, has now been torn apart and many of the LAC members, together with an estimated 300 children, have fled the area. What the might of the police and the intrigues of the development board could not achieve in five years, has been accomplished in two months by vigilante violence.

LAW AND ORDER IN FORT BEAUFORT

Introduction

The Fort Beaufort vigilante violence, as in Huhudi and Thabong, was closely associated with community councillors. What the Fort Beaufort study reveals is that the vigilante violence followed closely the pattern of police actions. More notably the incidence of vigilante violence accelerated markedly once alleged police assaults had abated after lawyers had taken steps to report the actions of members of the Fort Beaufort police to higher authorities.

The Background

Fort Beaufort is a small rural town, 143 kms east of East London. Most of its 10 000 inhabitants are black and live in the surrounding townships. Daily life in the Fort Beaufort townships is a struggle. The small, four-roomed houses each shelter about seven or eight people. The houses are crowded together. There is no electricity, tarred roads, no proper sewerage system (buckets only), and certainly no swimming pool.

stadium or halls.

Health services are virtually non-existent. There is a poorly equipped clinic (two sisters, no doctor) and the area has a single social worker.

Despite endemic unemployment (the Eastern Cape has the highest unemployment figures in South Africa), township housing rates have increased regularly. People may expect to be out of work for four or more years, however they are restricted by law from seeking employment in the main urban areas. Instead the authorities pressurize people to work in the Ciskei and Transkei for wages which are well below the poverty datum line. Employment in Fort Beaufort itself is no guarantee of a living wage. Many families earn R15 a week as labourers for the Eastern Cape Development Board. Some 60 or 70 are employed like this. Short-term contract workers with firms like LTA Construction take home R40 a fortnight. Some live-in domestic workers earn as little as R30 per month (see (1986)40 *Work in Progress*). Many workers previously relied on mine recruitment campaigns offering six or nine month contracts. These pay more than other forms of employment but recently the local development board placed limits on the number of recruits.

Community Organizations

Four main community organizations have identified with the residents' grievances over the past few years. The Congress of South African Students (COSAS), until its recent banning in July 1985, addressed the grievances of students. The main community organization is the Fort Beaufort 'Organ of Peace' on which the Youth Congress and Women's Organization are represented. The 'Organ of Peace' attempts to represent township residents on issues such as housing and service conditions, rents and unemployment. The state and local authority's response to community organizations has been uncompromising. Community leaders allege that police act with no sensitivity and little regard to legal and other restraints. By way of example, a plain-clothes constable from Fort Beaufort called as a witness in a case, was asked why it was necessary to take a statement from a 10-year-old at 00h15 in the morning and answered, 'I was busy, and he said he did not mind'.

The state-imposed system of community councils and councillors actions are major issues in Fort Beaufort. The seventeen councillors who are supposed to represent the community were not elected. When pressurized by local residents to resign, the councillors moved out of Timis and Dorrington to live in surrounding areas. Some stay as far afield as Alice and Seymour in flats provided by the authorities.

Residents see councillors as part of the machinery of state oppression. In 1984 there were six funerals for people allegedly shot by councillors or their associates. In each case police became involved leading to further shootings. Public funerals are now banned under the emergency regulations and police have warned residents that they would get substantial prison sentences if they attended such funerals. In one instance, people charged with attending the funeral of shooting victim Lulama Kama, were sentenced to five years imprisonment.

The declaration of a state of emergency in the Fort Beaufort district on 21 July only facilitated this heavy-handed approach by the authorities. According to township residents interviewed, the pattern of abuse, beatings and shootings continued as before except that police believed that they were indemnified by the emergency regulations from the consequences of their actions.

During November 1985, representatives of the Fort Beaufort community instructed attorneys to act on allegations of assault on Fort Beaufort residents by police. Lawyers reported to Fort Beaufort and collected evidence of abuses by the South African Police and vigilantes.

Affidavits taken and interviews conducted revealed that there were numerous allegations of police assault and also shootings and assaults by community councillors and their supporters on members of the community. Complaints against the police were so numerous that affidavits were taken mainly from those persons allegedly assaulted by, or in the presence of Fort Beaufort Police Station Commander, Captain Grobler. In less than two days, over 40 affidavits were taken from complainants. At least 20 referred to assaults in which Grobler had participated and many of the other affidavits detailed unlawful police assaults in Grobler's presence, including an assault by Sergeant Sijila who is inter alia alleged to have sjambokked and thrashed a 12-year-old epileptic child. The lawyers claimed that the affidavits allege a pattern of abuse by Fort Beaufort police. These include malicious damage to property; unlawful assault; misuse of emergency powers of arrest; failure to investigate offences or to accept charges of assault at the Fort Beaufort charge-office, particularly when their complaint is against a member of the police or community council.

This account of events before the state of emergency, by 17-year-old Zola Pikini, is supported by nine further affidavits. At midnight on 8 March 1985, during a vigil for the death of a son of the Ntsangana family, Zola Pikini heard a noise outside and a number of people ran into the house. He alleges: 'The police kicked the doors open and Captain Grobler and Sergeant Sijila entered the room where I was and

set about beating us with sjamboks and batons. I was struck on my back by Sergeant Sijila with a sjambok and Captain Grobler hit me on the head with a baton.' For some time the group was kept in a truck at the Fort Beaufort police station. While being transferred to smaller trucks parked nearby 'we were obliged to proceed through smaller parallel lines of policemen who thrashed us with sjamboks and batons.... I was struck on my left shoulder, right arm and right temple with a sjambok and on my head with a baton....' During the process of counting, taking names and addresses and fingerprints, the group were ordered to return to the Bedford truck. Pikini alleges that each time they climbed on they were assaulted. Pikini was hurt on the back, arms and head. The group was then taken to Cookhouse and detained for the weekend.

In her affidavit, Ester Toni, a 45-year-old unemployed mother, said that on 18 August 1985, at 21h00 she saw an armoured vehicle (hippo) stop outside the house. A number of police including Captain Grobler, alighted from the hippo. 'He wanted to know where the petrol bomb was that my son, Sithombela, had been carrying.' Ester Ntoni claims that Sithombela had returned from the nearby shop five minutes earlier with a cabbage, bread, margarine and one packet of beef stock and was 'definitely not carrying a petrol bomb'. Ntoni said that she watched while Captain Grobler searched Sithombela and found money in his pocket:

'Grobler grabbed Sithombela in an attempt to put him in the hippo. I was desperate that he should not be taken by the police as I feared that he would be beaten up and so I grabbed him as well. Grobler let go of my son who immediately ran into the house. I ran after my son. Grobler followed us by kicking the door down, which was not locked. He was followed by three policemen, two whites and one black. Grobler was carrying a rifle and he began to hit my son with the butt of the gun. He hit him a number of times on the head and back. I rushed to the corner where my son was screaming with pain and put myself between him and the policeman. We both fell to the floor and Grobler repeatedly hit us both with the rifle. The blows fell mainly on myself, however it was impossible to completely protect my son. Most of the blows landed on my thighs and I screamed from the pain.'

Ntoni said that neither Grobler nor the other policemen asked questions during the assault. She alleges that Grobler left and:

'then returned and began to beat me with a sjambok, I was hit approximately five times. I screamed and begged him to stop. I still have these marks on my back from the thrashing.'

The policemen then left.

'I was bleeding and in a lot of pain. However I realised the importance of laying a charge against the policemen who had beaten me, so after resting for a while Sithombela and I helped each other to the Fort Beaufort police station. When we got to the police station we went to the charge office and told the white policeman on duty that we wanted to lay a charge of assault. He replied that we should complain to the community councillors and not at the police station. I realised that they were not going to allow me to lay a charge, so I and my son went home.'

On 18 December 1985, the ex-moderator of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, Dr Alan Maker, submitted 34 of the affidavits to the



An 11-year-old youth who was attacked by vigilantes, including community councillors, in Fort Beaufort.

Minister of Law and Order, Louis Le Grange, pointing out that Mr Le Grange had earlier undertaken to 'investigate any and every accusation of police brutality or abuse'. It was hoped that an investigation would be launched which would deal with the policemen found guilty of any offenses and end the pattern of abuse by police in Fort Beaufort. At the same time the 34 affidavits were handed to the Divisional Commissioner of Police for the Eastern Cape by the chairman of the Eastern Cape Attorneys Association, Mr Williams.

However the subsequent drop in police assaults was matched by an increase in attacks on residents by community councillors.

Community Councillors and Police

On 21 December 1985, residents reported a significant increase in attacks on township residents by community councillors. The residents stated that they were in a completely powerless position to stop vigilante assaults upon them as they stated that from early 1985 the South African Police had appeared to adopt a partisan attitude towards the community councillors and their supporters. There were well-known incidents where nothing had come of laying charges against the councillors.

On 21 December, Fort Beaufort community councillors assaulted two children. Nowandle Mathe, the 34-year-old mother of one of the children, recently applied to the Supreme Court to protect her 11-year-old son, Themba, who had been attacked by a vigilante group led by community councillors. When she tried to lay charges against the councillors she alleges that the police protected them.

She said that just before midnight on 21 December 1985 she heard the sound of Themba screaming from across the street where he was sleeping at the house of a friend, Xolane Rangule. She ran across the road and saw a number of men running out of the front door:

'I recognised Sithombe Mbewu, Taya Nzima and Makweze Gabashe, all of whom are community councillors in the Fort Beaufort location. I ran into Rangule's house and saw my son Themba lying on the floor in the dining room. He was crying loudly and I could see his stomach bleeding.'

Mrs Mathe said that she rushed to pick up her son, who seemed hysterical with pain. She could see blood dripping through the white vest he was wearing:

'He told me that he and Xolane had been asleep in the bedroom when Nzima, Mbewu and Gabashe and a number of black men entered the bedroom and immediately started to hit them with sjamboks and sticks. I took him home and stripped off his clothes and washed him. He had a number of sjambok marks on his upper torso. There was one deep gash on his chest which was bleeding badly. He also had sjambok marks on his shoulder and side of his back.'

On Sunday 22 December Mrs Mathe and her son, accompanied by the father of the other child who had been assaulted by the community

councillors on the previous day, went to the police station in Fort Beaufort to lay charges. At the police station a black constable by the name of Danster began to take a statement from Rangule. Then Sergeant Sijile came to the office and told us 'that our children would continue to be beaten and that our case would not succeed. He told Danster to stop taking Mr Rangule's statement as he was wasting the government's money by doing so.' Mrs Mathe says Sijile told them to leave the charge office and report the case at the police station at the black township. However there is no police station in the Fort Beaufort township.

Pumzile Yoyo who lives with his mother, an old-age pensioner, states in his affidavit that on 21 December 1985 he went to the toilet in the back yard of his house. On approaching the toilet he noticed about ten men gathered at the back of the yard. He recognized three of them as being community councillors, namely Taya Nzima, Siphwiwo Nzima and Makwezi Gabashe:

'Taya Nzima asked me where I was going and I replied that I was going to the toilet whereupon Siphwiwo hit me with a baton on my back. At the same time the others in the group began to hit me with sjamboks and sticks. I fell to the ground and begged them to stop hitting me, however my pleas had no effect on them and the beating continued. I tried to protect myself by covering my head with my arms but was unable to stop all the blows. I remember that I was hit a number of times by Taya Nzima who was carrying a sjambok and I also remember being hit by Makwezi Gabashe who was carrying a baton. I was screaming on the ground as they continued to hit me. At some stage I saw an iron axe-shaped object. However I was in such pain that I was not sure as to whether I was hit with it during these assaults. A short while later I felt a great blow on the side of my head and blood started to pour down my face. As I lost consciousness I felt a blow on my mouth and I felt no pain, only shock and then things went faint and black.

When I regained consciousness I saw that my assailants were leaving the yard of my house and I started to crawl back to the house.'

On the following day, 22 December, Pumzile Yoyo went to lay a charge against the community councillor vigilantes at the South African Police station in Fort Beaufort. When he arrived at the charge office of the police station he was told by a Sergeant Godwana to come back later. On the following day Yoyo went to the police station to lay a charge. When he entered the office of Sergeant Makalima he noticed that two of the persons who had beaten him up, namely Nzima and Gabashe, were in the office talking to Makalima.

He states 'Makalima asked me what I wanted and I replied that I was there to report an assault on my person by Mr Nzima and Mr Gabashe and a number of others. Mr Makalima got very angry and told me that I should go away otherwise he would arrest me. I then left the police station and went home.'

Pumzile Yoyo returned the next day, 23 December, to the police station. On this occasion he took his 35-year-old brother as he was



Mrs Ruji attacked by vigilantes in Fort Beaufort.

scared that he might be arrested. He says:

'When we arrived at Makalima's office before we said anything he grabbed my brother Vuyani and handcuffed him to the chair and then told us that he was detaining Vuyani. I immediately asked him the reason for the detention which he refused to tell me.'

Some time later Pumzile Yoyo was told by Makalima that if he did not leave the police station he would be locked up. Mr Yoyo left the police station. He says that he now lives in fear of his life as he is convinced that the community councillor vigilantes will return and he says that he knows that the police will do nothing to stop them.

On 9 January, the Supreme Court granted an interim interdict restraining the three community councillors from unlawfully assaulting and threatening Themba Mathe and Xolane Rangule. The Supreme Court also granted an interim interdict against Sergeant Sijile, restraining him from preventing complaints of assault by the children being investigated and also restraining him from prejudicing an investigation into the allegations of assault.

It is clear that what is taking place in Fort Beaufort is not merely a case of inter-community violence. The affidavits taken reveal a degree of complicity by at least some members of the SAP in attempts to protect the perpetrator of the illegal assaults.

It remains to be seen whether the recent Supreme Court ruling against both the community councillors who are responsible for vigilante violence and the policemen who attempted to protect them will have any effect on the level of vigilante violence in Fort Beaufort.

SOUTH AFRICA'S HOMELANDS: AUTHORITARIAN AND UNDEMOCRATIC

SOUTH AFRICA'S HOMELANDS

Vigilantes have operated in several homelands from at least the beginning of the decade, working either with the passive connivance of the homeland authorities or under their direct instruction. In this section we deal with the emergence of vigilantes in KwaNdebele and their re-emergence in the Ciskei. Vigilante or mob activity in Natal, some of which, it is claimed, is associated with members of Inkatha, is dealt with in a separate section.

The repressive function and character of various of the homelands and their regimes, has been dealt with more fully in other publications. (See Miriam Lakob *Human Rights in the Homelands* Fund for Free Expression (1984); Nicholas Haysom *Ruling with the Whip* Centre for Applied Legal Studies (1983); G Mare *Oppression in/through the Bantustans* SARS No 6 (1982); R Wickstead and B Streak *Render unto Kaiser* (1981); A Chaskalson and S Duncan *Influx Control* Carnegie Conference Paper No 81 (1984)). But to understand the emergence of vigilantes in these territories, it is necessary to review the function and character of the homelands.

The origins of homelands can be traced to the legislative division of South Africa into 'white' and 'black' land in 1913. The 'black areas', to this day comprise little more than 13 per cent of the land area of South Africa. Blacks are essentially prohibited from being in the white areas unless they qualify in terms of requirements set out in various laws.

Prior to 1948 this geographic division had primarily an economic function — the maintenance of the rural end of the migrant labour equation. After 1948, the reserves later known variously as 'homelands', 'bantustans', 'self-governing territories' and 'national states' assumed crucial political significance. The National Party proposed that blacks should not be seen as a single racial category but rather as eight discrete ethnic nations, subsequently two more ethnic groups were 'discovered'. Each ethnic nation was to be entitled to its own independent homeland — that is, one of the overcrowded and economically precarious reserves.

The corollary of the privilege of political rights in the homeland was that political rights for blacks would never be granted in the Central

Parliament of 'white' South Africa. The reserves were thus elevated from the position of a self-generating labour pool to the final solution to South Africa's political problems.

Commentators have suggested that the homelands serve a secondary political function in containing discontent arising from economic and political structures. It is precisely in these areas that the inequalities of separate development are most acute. Homeland rulers are increasingly called upon to police separate development by fair means or foul, and with the reassuring knowledge that in the last instance they are backed by the might of the South African state.

The devolution of legislative and executive powers to homeland authorities has followed twin processes, peculiar to the homelands. Legislative and executive powers have been built upon refashioned and distorted tribal structures. The white central administration appointed and deposed chiefs as it saw fit, giving them extensive executive authority, financial rewards, control over the distribution of social welfare grants and, very importantly, power to allocate land to their subjects.

It is thus not surprising that the constitutions of these homelands reflect a lack of faith in representative democracy. For example the KwaNdebele legislature made no provision until recently for any elected members. The Ciskeian parliament comprised 22 elected representatives to 32 appointed tribal personages. Bophuthatswana, which has more elected members than chiefs and designated members, is considered a comparative model of democracy. Nor is it surprising that in the homelands the appointed tribal chiefs should overwhelmingly support the policies of separate development on which their substantially augmented rewards and powers are based. Those that have challenged the homeland authorities or the central government have found their jurisdiction dwindling or they have been deposed. It is not unusual for the homeland cabinets to be largely comprised of chiefs. In the Ciskei for example in 1983, seven out of eight Cabinet Ministers were chiefs.

Accordingly, the role of chiefs and headmen in engineering consent to the homelands' ruling parties cannot be underestimated. Chiefs not only have a powerful position in distributing scarce resources, they have an extremely important role in sanctioning or endorsing migrant labour contracts. The poorer homelands such as KwaNdebele and Ciskei, are able to provide jobs only for a fraction of their workers. Those seeking to avoid starvation are forced to obtain employment outside the homelands and hence require labour contracts. In the Ciskei the chiefs

themselves are allocated contracts in accordance with their loyalty to the ruling party. Thus in the Ciskei the system operates as a form of control both over and by the chiefs (*Rand Daily Mail* 21 July 1983).

The use of the traditional tribal authorities is a powerful weapon in the hands of the homeland authorities, effective in even the remotest areas, and associated with the supply of vigilante forces.

Tribal authorities are of course not the only pillar of control upon which the homeland regimes rest. Such regimes have, with one exception, legislation as severe or more so than the notorious Internal Security Act of South Africa. These laws limit freedom of assembly, provide for detention without trial, the prohibition of organizations and publications and the banishment of persons without the right of recourse to the courts. In addition they have police forces, their own armies or the South African Defence Force as well as such agencies as the tribal police. Tribal police in Lebowa and QwaQwa have inflicted serious assaults on persons who have fallen from official grace. In the Ciskei it is a security offence not to show such a person respect and obedience.

Almost without exception the homelands are characterized by their intolerance of opposition. This is discernible from the repeated arrest of dissidents and even of Members of Parliament and also from the opposition to trade union organization.

Because the homelands are underdeveloped, the possibilities of upward mobility lie in the civil services or in trading. Few of the homelands have escaped charges that access to both routes is dependent on government patronage or position.

The point of this thumb-nail sketch of the homelands is to show why the homeland political structures can be typified as authoritarian, undemocratic, vulnerable and brittle. It is precisely these features that make popular, non-ethnic (national) organizations threatening to homeland regimes. Resistance to homeland authorities often takes place out of the public eyes and the security apparatus is able to move in with a freer hand than elsewhere in South Africa where the international spotlight burns more brightly. Thus Life-President Lennox Sebe of the Ciskei could make the astonishing assertion, without any outcry, that, in the Ciskei, 'potential insurgents should expect to be tortured' (*Sunday Times* 24 November 1985).

Opposition to the homeland regimes is most likely to emerge either in the urban homeland areas which are not controlled by tribal structures, or areas like Moutse, which have not been administered by homeland authorities for years. It is precisely in these areas that vigilantes have

emerged in order to reimpose the absolute authority of the relevant homeland regimes. The vigilantes have acted, some victims claim, as a surrogate police force unrestrained by legal limits: the homeland vigilantes are more reminiscent of fascist black shirts than are their more complex urban counterparts.

THE DOUBLE CROSS: CISKEIAN VIGILANTES

Vigilantes and the Mdantsane Bus Boycott

Although the operation of Ciskeian vigilantes was recorded in 1974, the first highly public emergence of vigilantes in South Africa occurred during the Mdantsane Bus Boycott in 1983. Mdantsane is the largest town in the Ciskei, a dormitory town for black workers employed in and around the port of East London with an estimated population of 350,000 people.

As a result of what was alleged to be a unilateral increase in the fares of buses partly owned by the Ciskeian government the residents of Mdantsane decided to boycott the bus service. Initially the bus boycott was only partially successful but when the Ciskeian authorities began seriously to harrass commuters the boycott gained momentum. The Ciskeian authorities employed various means to attempt to compel commuters to use the buses. In particular, road blocks were set up which attempted to prevent residents from either walking to town, using their own transport, using taxis, or catching trains. In August 1983 the most dramatic incident occurred when Ciskeian Defence Force soldiers opened fire on commuters, killing seven who were attempting to bypass a police cordon around the railway station at Mount Ruth. At about this time a large number of vigilantes were bussed in from the rural areas. They were housed at the local soccer stadium, the Sisa Dukashe Soccer Stadium. From this base the vigilantes patrolled the streets, enforcing an evening curfew, manning roadblocks and assaulting residents for a variety of reasons. Vigilantes saw fit to demand the production of membership cards of the Ciskeian National Independence Party (CNIP), the party of Life President Sebe, South African reference books (although 'passes' are not required by law in the Ciskei), rental receipts, tax receipts, and other documentation. Failure to produce these resulted in various forms of punishment including arbitrary assaults or detention. The vigilantes were also used to man roadblocks — allegedly under the supervision of the police. Vigilantes, however, frequently worked on their own, assaulting taxi drivers accused of ferrying commuters, extracting passengers from private vehicles and

assaulting and sjambokking residents walking to East London. The most chilling aspect of the vigilante activities was their use of the Sisa Dukashe Stadium as an informal torture room. Hundreds of members of the public alleged that they had been captured and taken to the stadium where they were interrogated and/or thrashed with sjamboks, or worse (N Haysom *Ruling with the Whip* (1983)). After the activities of the vigilantes were fully exposed in the press and the United States Consulate had warned US citizens not to enter the Ciskei, the vigilantes were disbanded and sent back to the rural areas from which they had come.

In response to the accusations of uncontrolled violence meted out by the vigilantes, President Sebe claimed that the vigilantes had been used as a police reserve acting at all times under the supervision of the Ciskeian police. That this was not the case seems clear from the widely reported accounts given by vigilante victims. However, President Sebe's admission that the vigilantes had received official backing serves to confirm that this homeland was prepared to use vigilantes when its authority was threatened.

The Emergence of Vigilantes in 1985

Vigilantes re-emerged in the Zwelitsha township in late 1985 as the nationwide opposition to apartheid reached the western borders of the Ciskei. Zwelitsha is the township outside King Williamstown and is close to Bisho, the capital of the Ciskei.

The Official Attitude to Vigilantes

It appears that, at least initially, the Zwelitsha vigilantes enjoyed the support of the state. Prior to their reappearance, President Sebe called for the formation of such groups in all towns and villages in the Ciskei, in a speech in the township in October 1985. In promising that 'evildoers' would be 'hunted like animals' he said that security forces would be withheld from communities that did not have vigilante groups and that men who did not join groups would be evicted from their homes (*Weekly Mail* 8 November 1985).

The attitude of the Ciskeian police to the Zwelitsha vigilantes was also supportive. The Liaison Officer, Lieutenant Mavuso Ngwendu, acknowledged that the police were aware of the group's existence but said that it operated separately from the police. He added that its function was to guard schools and government buildings (*Weekly Mail* 8 November 1985). Not surprisingly, reports from Zwelitsha residents indicate a wider and less passive role.

Method of Operation

Residents reported that the vigilantes patrolled Zwelitsha after dark in three white Ciskeian government kombis (*Weekly Mail* 8 November 1985). One member of the group later claimed that its leader, a Ciskeian Member of Parliament, Mr W K Matshekethwa, had told them that there should be no people in the streets of Zwelitsha after 20h00. Hence, an informal curfew was placed on the township.

In an incident reported in the press, a group of men attacked people at a party in a house in Zwelitsha. They also broke window panes and lights. The men were armed with sticks, sjamboks, knobkerries and tomahawks. The motivation for the attack appears to be that the vigilantes believed that the partygoers were 'holding a meeting', although the music being played must have suggested a gathering of a more frivolous nature. After the initial assaults the men took their victims to the Zwelitsha police station. It is alleged that further assaults took place on entering the charge office. At least 20 people were treated for injuries at the Mount Coke hospital as a result of the attack (*Daily Dispatch* 21 October 1985).

In another incident a Zwelitsha resident was severely assaulted by men who were travelling in two unregistered lorries and a kombi. Some of the men wore masks. The victim required hospitalization and remained unconscious for hours after the attack. Witnesses had earlier seen the same men chasing a youth from a beerhall after asking him why he was not working (*Daily Dispatch* 18 October 1985). In another incident alleged vigilantes killed a former leader of the banned South African Students' Organization, Zalisile Mathyholo (*Cape Times* 15 November 1985).

The State's Action Against the Vigilantes

In a sudden change of policy, the state turned on the Zwelitsha group, arresting 54 men initially and two more at a later stage and charged them with murder, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm, malicious damage to property and arson (*Weekly Mail* 22 November 1985). This was perhaps a response to proposed legal action against individual vigilantes and the Minister of Justice, Police and Prisons. Attempts were also made to publicly distance the state from the actions of the vigilantes: the Minister of Social Welfare and Pensions, Mr A M Tapa expressed the government's grief at the reports of assault in Zwelitsha. He said the people involved had only been asked to protect schools; the Minister of Defence, Chief D N Mavuso, said that the government would never allow violence irrespective of its source (*Daily Dispatch* 21

November 1985).

When the 54 men appeared in court for the first time, allegations of state involvement emerged: two men asked to be released so that they could go back to the 'camp' where they had been quartered. (It appeared that the group stayed in a 'camp' on a farm which formerly belonged to General Charles Sebe, deposed police and security chief); in cross examining the Station Commander of the Zwelitsha police station, Lieutenant Mzuyanda Vuso, one of the accused asked Vuso to read out a letter bearing his signature which said that the men were to guard schools and property (*Daily Dispatch* 19 November 1985). Some of the accused claimed that they had been given leave of absence from work, on full pay, to join 'their organization'. Employers named in this regard were the Department of Public Works and the Cecilia Makiwane Hospital in Mdantsane. One of the men claimed that permission for him to be absent from work was granted by the Minister of Transport, Chief H Zulu (*Daily Dispatch* 22 November 1985). It is clear that the accused believed that they had a mandate from the state to act as a 'peacekeeping force' (*Daily Dispatch* 19 November 1985).

The original 54 accused claimed that their leader was a Member of Parliament for Zwelitsha, Mr W K Matshekethwa. He was later arrested and charged. When he appeared in court, one of his co-accused alleged that Matshekethwa had called the men to the Bisho Stadium to form the group. From there he conveyed them in government vehicles to the 'camp' where they were to stay during the 'operation'. The man also alleged that their accommodation had been arranged by a second Member of Parliament, Miss Gonya, in consultation with the Committee of Four. Matshekethwa denied the allegations (*Daily Dispatch* 14 December 1985).

MBHOKOTO: KWANDEBELE'S BLACK SHIRTS EKANGALA AND MOUTSE

'We started this homeland with only R16,40 in our coffers ... we are now able to count our money in millions ... Now that we have built expensive schools people want to burn them. Mbokotho will deal with such people.'

Chief Minister of KwaNdebele, Simon Skosana, at the inaugural meeting of the Mbhokoto on 26 January 1985 (*Sowetan* 28 January 1986).

KwaNdebele is the smallest and arguably the most impoverished of South Africa's homelands. It is ruled by a powerful clique of men centred around the Chief Minister, Simon Skosana. Skosana and his ministers are unaccountable even to those within the borders of KwaNdebele and have made it clear that they will brook little

opposition to their ambitions. This report will look at two communities, Moutse and Ekangala, which have been subjected to violence by vigilantes acting with the apparent approval of the KwaNdebele authorities, if not with their backing. The South African Police in the district of Moutse and the township of Ekangala have so far proved themselves to be incapable — or alternatively unwilling — to curb these vigilantes.

The decision of the South African authorities to create a homeland for the Ndebele in 1979 was greeted with disbelief and concern. These feelings were exceeded only in 1983 when it was announced that the leaders of this unhappy district were intent on opting for 'independent' status for the territory.

The Making of KwaNdebele

The creation of KwaNdebele was an act of social engineering. Those Ndebele who did not follow the warrior Mzilikazi into modern-day Zimbabwe in the 1830's were fractured into several groups in the Transvaal. Defeated by the Boers in 1883, the Ndebele lost their autonomy and their land. The few Southern Ndebele that remained, were mostly clustered in the Roos Senekal district of the Transvaal. One Ndebele chief had, however, purchased land by 1925 and lived under the jurisdiction of a Sotho chief, one Chief Mathebe in Moutse. This group, the only Ndebele group in what is now KwaNdebele, formed a small part, of the Bantoane Tribal Authority for over 40 years. No provision was made for an Ndebele homeland. The reason for this was obviously because the Ndebele comprised such a very small ethnic grouping. They were scattered and had no authentic territory of origin, and in any event there was no land on which to base the fiction of a separate nation state. Indeed, prior to 1975, KwaNdebele consisted of 55 000 hectares.

In 1979, under the Promotion of the Black Self-Government Act, the South Ndebele were named as a unit entitled to self-government. This development had been preceded by demands principally advanced by the current Chief Minister Skosana for an independent homeland for the Ndebele. These demands had first surfaced at a conference at Hammanskraal in 1969 but KwaNdebele remained a mere territorial authority until the KwaNdebele Legislative Assembly was established in 1979.

Despite its late development, its small population, its minute territory and atavistic political style, KwaNdebele has been favoured above other national states — particularly in respect of the allocation of land — by

the South African government. Critics claim that the reason for this is the KwaNdebele authorities' decision to opt for 'independent' status in line with the policy of separate development. Since 1975 Pretoria has allocated large sections of neighbouring land to the original farm occupied by a small group of Ndebele. This land includes formerly white-owned farms, and land traditionally considered non-Ndebele. The most notable of these is Moutse.

KwaNdebele's population has grown dramatically as a result of resettlement and the flight of thousands from Bophuthatswana where they had been victimized for being non-Tswana. An estimated 50 000 persons left the Bophuthatswana squatter camp of Winterveld as a result of such victimization. Others have moved to KwaNdebele because it is situated within commuting distance of areas north of Pretoria. Many of those who have been relocated in KwaNdebele are not Ndebele.

In the case of Ekangala, a modern township due for incorporation into KwaNdebele, persons have been moved from the overcrowded East Rand. At the time that urban migrants moved to Ekangala, there was no indication that Ekangala would be handed over to KwaNdebele. On the contrary, the impression created by officials was that there would be dual control of Ekangala.

As a result of these developments, by 1985 KwaNdebele had grown to an estimated size of 350 000 ha and a population of 300 000 (*Star* 18 September 1985).

The most striking feature of KwaNdebele is its rank poverty. Shortly after the homeland was created, newspapers referred to it as 'the homeland of shattered hopes' (*Star* 8 December 1980) and a land of 'tin huts and hunger' (*Sunday Express* 31 May 1981). It is estimated that over 200 000 people have been resettled or moved as squatters into KwaNdebele since it was established. There were and are no hospitals in KwaNdebele. There is however a profusion of shanties and in 1980 the area was considered a typhoid and cholera risk. In 1982 the absence of adequate running water was said to be marked and pressure on existing running water so low that districts took turns in drawing water from their taps. According to one report, there was almost no agriculture in KwaNdebele in 1982 (*Star* 29 June 1982). Furthermore, research done by the Bureau of Economic Research (BENSO), found in 1981 that the homeland's agricultural potential was very limited, only 15 to 20 per cent of the land is arable (*Star* 18 September 1985). There is no industrial sector to speak of and in 1982, of the average annual per capita income of R 341, only 12 per cent of this was earned inside the



Mbhokoto victim from Moutse
(Courtesy of *Afrapix*)

homeland and R50 million of its R69 million budget came from direct South African aid (*Star* 18 September 1985). The prospect of a self-sufficient and independent KwaNdebele is inconceivable. Despite this, Chief Minister Skosana has, from the birth of his homeland, hinted that his government would seek 'independence'. And indeed the 'credit' for the creation of this homeland must lie with Skosana's ambition, abetted by the Department of Co-operation and Development.

Closed, Authoritarian and Undemocratic

When KwaNdebele reached the self-governing phase of constitutional development in 1981, all forty-six members of its parliament were nominated. At present KwaNdebele has 12 elected members. Women do not have the vote in KwaNdebele. KwaNdebele outdid even the Ciskei in refusing to have a referendum prior to choosing to become 'independent'.

Aspirant businessmen have complained that most business licences go to a cabal of businessmen-politicians 'whose tight-hold over business life keeps competition to a minimum' (*Rand Daily Mail* 15 June 1982). The same report stated that many of the territory's liquor licences were held by government ministers and cited a missionary who observed that nearly 'all the new shops belong to Government officials or members of their families'. The strong man in the Cabinet, Minister of the Interior, Mr P M Ntuli, stated in response that 'with two exceptions, the Ministers had businesses before they became Ministers of the Cabinet' (*Star* 30 June 1982). This Minister is in charge of the ministry which approved his own application for a liquor licence.

One of the most striking features of the KwaNdebele political system is the extent to which it is closed. Indeed, there is little written about KwaNdebele precisely because there are effective barriers against journalists visiting and writing about the area. In 1981 officials of the South African Institute of Race Relations and the South African Council of Churches were detained for up to ten hours because they lacked permits to be in the area. Visitors to KwaNdebele require a permit before they can enter the homeland. Journalists have concluded that KwaNdebele's officials are afraid that conditions there will be revealed to the world. Frequently journalists have had visas or permits to be in the area refused. In 1982 Patrick Laurence reported that permits had to be approved by the entire KwaNdebele Cabinet, making it a matter of weeks rather than days before a journalist would be allowed access to the area. The Cabinet has a hostile approach to outside organizations including organized religion. Indeed this is one of the few

territories which exhibits a hostility towards Operation Hunger (*Rand Daily Mail* 15 June 1982). The article quoted the following statement from a resident:

'There are Ministers who think their word is law. It seems that once they get into power they think that nobody can do anything in KwaNdebele without their permission. Churches have offered all kinds of help in small ways, boreholes, school-feeding schemes, even a clinic, but the Cabinet has rejected them all unless it can just take the money and do it itself.'

The same article cited a resident who stated 'some of the officials take the limited view that they are in power and therefore only they have the right to do anything. Anyone else has to ask them for permission' (*Rand Daily Mail* 15 June 1982). Minister P M Ntuli himself received some publicity when, charged with the murder of persons in KwaNdebele, his son asked for the court's protection before giving evidence against his father (*Rand Daily Mail* 2 August 1984). Minister Ntuli was acquitted.

In 1982 Chief Minister Simon Skosana was the most educated member of the Cabinet and he had failed to attain standard six, the first year of high school. Whether or not this fact renders him incompetent, it remains a source of ribald taunts in the Moutse district.

But if KwaNdebele is undemocratic and closed, it is also authoritarian and disciplinarian. Apart from the conventional agencies of the South African Police and the allocation of extremely scarce resources such as licences, housing, land and water, tribal structures maintain an authoritarian obedience. A journalist, Z B Molefe, writing in 1981, was struck by the reluctance of anybody to be identified by name in the article he was writing. In particular he noted the interviewee's fear of the Tribal Police, widely regarded as 'the eyes and ears' of the Tribal Authority. KwaNdebele's tribal courts can impose extreme and vicious punishments. Molefe managed to talk to one of the members of the Tribal Police (Amaphoyisa Enkosi). The policeman bragged:

'Ja, the other night I arrested this white man at night. He was from the newspaper taking pictures of our houses. You know they had sneaked here with a sister [nun] from Pietersburg. Ha me! I handcuffed him there and then' (*Sowetan* 11 May 1981).

In the two areas examined below, traditional KwaNdebele authority has not yet been established. In both areas resistance to Ndebele leaders has emerged and KwaNdebele vigilantes have sought to beat the residents into complying with the authorities' intentions.

Ekangala

Ekangala is a small location near Bronkhorstspuit, approximately 100 kms east of the main Pretoria-Witwatersrand axis. It is a new township and the standard of housing is better than average, but the cost of living

is considerably higher than in other townships and rents vary from R130 to R200 a month. People moved there from East Rand townships like KwaThema and Tembisa where they had lived in back-yard shacks and garages. Despite the distance of Ekangala from their places of work (workers commute for up to five hours a day), it at least offered housing. People were encouraged to move to Ekangala but it was never suggested that it would become part of KwaNdebele. Most of the people who live in Ekangala are presently qualified to live in an urban area — a precious right which they will lose if Ekangala is incorporated into KwaNdebele. The Ekangala Action Committee (EAC) was formed in May 1984 soon after most residents moved to Ekangala. The Committee held regular report backs and negotiated with the development board officials. They managed to improve commuter transport and to have the bus fares reduced (*TRAC Report* 29 September 1985).

In February 1985 the Committee's cordial relationship with the authorities came to an abrupt end when Dr Gerrit Viljoen, then Minister of Co-operation and Development, announced that the whole of Ekangala was to be incorporated into KwaNdebele. The EAC perceived this manoeuvre as a cynical betrayal and alleged that they had been lured to Ekangala under false pretences.

The EAC later presented the local magistrate with a petition signed by close on 1 000 people. On 23 March 1985, the EAC staged a peaceful protest march which resulted in the police confronting the marchers and a teenage boy being shot dead. Once again board offices were burnt and the home of a KwaNdebele supporter attacked (*Star* 26 March 1985). Since then, the development board and the local magistrate have refused the EAC permission to hold meetings and no longer recognizes their legitimacy.

By this point a third force had emerged — a group of KwaNdebele vigilantes, some of whom allegedly have direct connections with the KwaNdebele government (*TRAC Report* 30 September 1985).

The Emergence of Vigilantes

The presence of vigilantes became apparent approximately a week after the protest march. An Ekangala resident, Mrs Bettie Bembi, was asleep in her house when awoken at 23h30 on 30 March 1985 by a crowd of people banging on her doors and windows. She opened the door and approximately ten men carrying pangas, kierries and sjamboks and wearing balaclavas entered the house. They took her and her daughter outside where they accused her of holding EAC meetings at her house and then she and her daughter were assaulted. They were told that if

they did not want to be part of Ekangala, they must pack their things and go. Two neighbours who saw the attack were too scared to intervene.

On the same evening, at approximately at 20h00, Mr Enoch Dumuakude was confronted at his house by a number of vigilantes. Mr F K Mahlangu, a member of the KwaNdebele government, was allegedly among them. Mr Dumuakude alleges he was struck and kicked as he fell to the ground and some vigilantes pointed fire-arms at him. He was told that Ekangala was a place for the Ndebeles 'not a place for dogs from the East Rand'. Mr Dumuakude was then put in the boot of a white car and was driven around Ekangala. He was eventually driven to the Pretoria-Bronkhorstspuit-Kwaggafontein intersection where he was hit on the head — opening a wound on his skull — and left to walk home. Shortly after he got home, police arrived and initially suggested that he make a statement. Police allegedly agreed to fetch another person who had been assaulted that day but then changed their minds, saying they would take particulars and contact the victims when necessary. While this was being done, Dumuakude alleges that the white car in which he had been abducted drove past. The police followed it but returned within fifteen minutes saying that they knew it was not the right car. The police took Dumuakude home and said they would contact him at home or at work to talk about their progress. They did not contact him again and the following Thursday, Dumuakude fled Ekangala after his assailants began looking for him again.

On the night of 30 March, Peter Kose, Vice-Chairman of the Ekangala Action Committee, had the doors and windows of his house broken by vigilantes. He reported this to the police but was not aware of any results. A Mr Sibiya, believed to be a vigilante, attempted to abduct Mr Kose in April. On 15 June the vigilantes again began to seek out Peter Kose. On the same night several people associated with Kose or believed to have links with the EAC or who unwittingly crossed the path of the vigilantes were assaulted. Kose himself hid in the house of Johannes Khumalo. Approximately four cars arrived at the house shortly afterwards and attempted to break open the door with a crowbar. Eventually Mr Kose and Mr Khumalo were beaten, put in a car with KwaNdebele registration and taken to the Ekangala High School. They were taken to an upstairs classroom where a feast was in progress and they recognized Mr F K Mahlangu. While the party ate, Mr Khumalo was allegedly beaten with sjamboks and sticks on his chest, back and head. After about two hours he was released. Mr Khumalo arrived at the Bronkhorstspuit police station at about 01h00 and allegedly encountered three white policemen. At this time Mr Khumalo

was bleeding from the shoulders, head and mouth, but it was only after one policeman had consulted with a senior officer over a walkie-talkie that a statement was reluctantly taken. Mr Khumalo allegedly requested the police to accompany him to the school where people were still being assaulted. They allegedly refused to leave the charge office. On Thursday the same week, a black policeman approached Mr Khumalo at his house and asked if he was the one who had been assaulted by the Ndebeles. During the course of the conversation the policeman informed him 'that this was Ndebele country'. Since then no one connected to the police has contacted Mr Khumalo.

After Mr Khumalo's release, Mr Kose was bundled into a car and driven for about two hours to a place called Ndzundza in KwaNdebele. During the drive he was allegedly threatened with a pistol and shots were fired from the car. At Ndzundza he was locked in a van for the night and transferred to a cell the next day. None of the men who dealt with him wore uniform:

'He was allegedly taken from the cell after dark on the second day and made to strip. Cold water was poured over him and he was beaten on his hands and feet by two men in plain clothes. Later a cloth bag was placed over his head and water poured over the bag, making it impossible for him to breathe. He was again warned not to oppose Ekangala's inclusion into KwaNdebele. He was driven back to Ekangala that night' (*Star* 21 June 1985).

On the evening of 27 July, Peter Kose was the subject of yet another attack by vigilantes. Three of his friends managed to escape but Kose was allegedly beaten by Sibiya and a number of other vigilantes. In a second attack that evening, he was hit with sticks, fists and sjamboks until he lost consciousness. Eye-witnesses allege that Sibiya swung Kose round by his feet so that his head bumped the tar. Others saw him being put in the boot of a white car and being driven off to house number 512, where Mr F K Mahlangu, a Minister of the KwaNdebele government, lives. Here again he was beaten. Many people, including his wife, heard him screaming for help but were helpless because they were scared of the vigilantes' fire-arms. His wife and Mrs Ndala then went to the Bronkhorstspuit police station to ask for help. A Captain Kendall, to whom she was referred, told her to go home and wait for him to come. She did so, but he never arrived at her home. When Peter Kose finally regained consciousness he found himself fully clothed in a bath of cold water with people pouring water on him.

'Blood was pouring down me. While I was in the bath they kept on assaulting me' (*Star* 31 July 1985).

Kose alleges that Captain Kendall then entered the room, ordered him out of the bath and took him to Bronkhorstspuit Police Station.

Two black policemen then took him to a doctor. He was taken back to the police station and locked in a cell. In the meantime the vigilantes had come into the police station and laid a charge against Peter Kose. Kose himself was unable to lay a charge until his lawyer arrived on the Monday morning. He was then released pending a court appearance and was admitted to Hillbrow hospital where his leg was set in a plaster cast.

In August a dossier of statements was submitted to the office of the Attorney-General and a full explanation for the failure to prosecute was demanded. As a result charges against Kose were dropped and Sibiya was charged. His case had not been heard by February and he is not in custody.

There was some respite in vigilante activities after charges were accepted. But on December 26, two adult men were attacked by youths, some of whom were relatives of the vigilantes. One of the victims has allegedly suffered brain damage.

There is no question that the activities of the vigilantes were directed at the Ekangala Action Committee. It is also clear that the Ekangala Action Committee had enjoyed popular support as a result of its concrete achievements and its democratic relationship with residents of Ekangala. What the vigilantes may yet achieve, is the neutralization of the EAC and the disorganization of the community. If this is achieved, and in the organizational vacuum thus created, the KwaNdebele-backed committee and the Development Board will be able to take the initiative in incorporating the town into KwaNdebele, and imposing KwaNdebele-style authority on the residents.

The vigilante actions were not the only attempt to counteract the effectiveness of the Ekangala Action Committee. At about the same time it was announced that an Ekangala Representative Committee had been appointed by the Minister of Interior of KwaNdebele, Mr P M Ntuli. This committee appears to have opened a door to the township manager, the East Rand Development Board and the KwaNdebele government. Not surprisingly, several of the vigilantes and a number of KwaNdebele government members, including Minister F K Mahlangu, Mr P Sibiya and Mr Isaac Mziza, sit on the committee. A pamphlet distributed by the Representative Committee claimed credit for the results achieved by the EAC.

Moutse

Introduction

Moutse provided the rural setting for the same kind of KwaNdebele backed vigilantes who had terrorised Ekangala. On the 1st January 1986 over 400 adults from this area — also resistant to the prospect of being ceded to KwaNdebele — were forcibly taken from Moutse to the KwaNdebele capital and viciously thrashed in the presence of senior members of the KwaNdebele government. Police have also displayed a reluctance to arrest the perpetrators of this large scale abduction and assault. Prime Minister Skosana and Mr Ntuli have been identified as assailants and charges laid against them.

Background

Moutse, approximately 100 kms North-East of Pretoria, comprises three districts, and is situated between Marble Hall and Groblersdal. Its total area is 66 000 hectares and its estimated population is more than 120 000. For over 200 years the Bantoane people of Moutse have worked the land and built their community. In 1924, the Ndebele Chief Mapoch requested permission to settle in the area and was given a place for his people at Weltevrede. The Ndebele of Moutse — approximately 20 per cent of the population — have lived under the predominantly Sotho Community Authorities and the Sotho Tribal Authorities.

Part of Pretoria's attempt to artificially inflate KwaNdebele, planned initially without the knowledge of the Moutse people, was a proposal to cede Moutse to KwaNdebele. In 1980, Moutse was excised from Lebowa in terms of Proclamation R210 of 1980. In 1981, the Minister of Co-operation and Development, Dr Koornhof, visited Moutse. A crowd of 6 000 residents greeted him and voiced their total opposition to incorporation. Whereas 300 white vociferous farmers also due to have their land incorporated into KwaNdebele, were able to successfully oppose this, the vociferous opposition of Moutse counted for nothing. The people of Moutse do not have a vote in the white house of Parliament.

In 1984 and 1985, several meetings were held between the central government and the Lebowan representatives, sometimes including Moutse leaders. On all these occasions strong opposition to the incorporation was voiced. These meetings proved sham negotiation, for, in the face of implacable opposition, Pretoria made it clear in November 1985 that it was giving Moutse to KwaNdebele, regardless of the feelings of the people who lived in Moutse. The announcement



Moutse victim of the Mbhokoto vigilantes.
(Courtesy of Afrapix)

stirred ethnic hostility in an area with a history of ethnic harmony. Approximately 50 per cent of the Moutse population is of North Sotho origin, while the other 50 percent is a mixture of Shangaans, Zulus, Xhosa, Tswana, Ndebele and South Sotho. Moutse will substantially augment KwaNdebele's size, population, and resources — it has the only hospital in the region.

There have been two distinct approaches to resisting the Moutse incorporation. The Dennilton Youth Congress and young people in general are opposed to inclusion in any homeland. They made it clear even before the government's final message that incorporation was non-negotiable was delivered to Moutse's traditional leaders. The opening of a discotheque in Dennilton in October gave them an unlikely opportunity to express their political stance when a high school student told the partying crowd that:

'We are not going to allow the authorities to push us around like pawns. We have made it clear to them long ago that we do not want anything to do with the homelands, be it Lebowa or KwaNdebele' (*Star* 12 October 1985).

Some of the traditional leaders, seen by many to be leadingst the battle against incorporation, have tended to the view that 'our political destiny is in Lebowa'. But they do not exclude the option of remaining part of 'white' South Africa.

One of these leaders, Lebowa MP for Moutse, Mr Maredi Chueu, has no doubt that Moutse is KwaNdebele's reward for taking independence: 'We feel like John the Baptist's head being served up on a platter,' he said at a press conference on 18 November 1985, just hours after Pretoria had made it clear the incorporation issue was no longer open to negotiation. Mr Chueu said that the first violence provoked by incorporation had occurred that week when youths had clashed with KwaNdebele sympathizers (*Star* 19 November 1985). A boycott of KwaNdebele-baked bread and of certain businesses was declared (*Weekly Mail* 22 November).

In November and December, the authorities saw fit to ban or disperse meetings called by Moutse residents to discuss the removal.

On 17 December police fought running battles with youths who had gathered for a rally at the chief's kraal and had been angered by the arrival of police patrols:

'Police returned with reinforcements, including several armoured vehicles and skirmishes ensued until late afternoon on the main road and on dirt side-streets' (*Star* 17 December).

Already the first attacks by Ndebele vigilantes had been reported. The targets were Dennilton Youth Congress members returning from a

meeting (*Star* 19 December).

Newspapers, central government MP's and a group of United States Senators all warned that violence was inevitable if the Moutse land deal went ahead. Already two young people had been shot dead in clashes between youths and police in the area in December (*Star* 3 January).

On 31 December 1985, Moutse was ceded to KwaNdebele.

Rumours of impending attacks by KwaNdebele vigilantes were rife in Moutse on 31 December. Chief T G Mathebe, the senior chief of the Moutse district and chairman of the Moutse territorial authority, accompanied by Godfrey Mathebe, an elected Lebowa Member of Parliament for Moutse, approached the Dennilton police station to request protection. They approached a Major Malan who finally agreed after some reluctance that he would attempt to protect the Moutse people in the event of such an attack but stated his priority was to protect the police station and magistrates' courts.

During the tense New Year's eve, youths in several areas, set up barricades of rocks and burning scrub to defend themselves against possible invasion: 'They said that police had been patrolling as New Year cries of "happy, happy" rang through the area and had trained spotlights on them' (*Star* 2 January 1986). But hours later when the vigilantes struck, Moutse villagers said, they had no police protection and were forced to defend themselves.

What was perceived as an attempt to kidnap the chief was foiled when four armed men — foreheads painted with the now familiar white cross of the Mbhokoto vigilantes — were found within 500m of his kraal at Kwarrilaagte and subsequently bludgeoned and stoned to death.

Pitched battles took place at Moteti and Kgobokoane as a few of the residents armed themselves and fought back against the invaders with white crosses on their foreheads, some of whom chanted 'Mbhokotho' (*Star* 2 January 1986).

More than 100 South African riot police in seven armoured vehicles had been seen at Dennilton police station on New Year's Day (*Star* 2 January). But, Mr Chueu said, police had taken 'a very indifferent attitude' to the plight of Moutse residents despite warnings of the attack (*Citizen* 3 January 1986). Police rejected these accusations, saying:

'From our daily statements it should be evident that the police are striving to contain the unrest and lawlessness in the area. Our comment on alleged vigilantes is that should any person be of the opinion that there is legal cause of complaint, such allegations can be made available to the police in the form of affidavits' (*Citizen* 4 January 1986).

Affidavits taken from persons abducted from the Moteti and the Kgobokoane districts claim that in both these places armed vigilantes,



Mouse residents queue for assistance after attack Mhokoto.
(Courtesy of *Afrapix*)

with white crosses painted on their foreheads, attacked the villages. Men were beaten and abducted. According to affidavits, many people subsequently reported stolen and destroyed property. Many of the men abducted were taken in vehicles with KwaNdebele government number plates to the capital of KwaNdebele, Siyabuswa. This is how some of the Moutse residents described what took place.

People living at Moteti and Kgobokoane villages had similar stories to tell. Mr PD said he had opened the door to find a man outside with a kierre. He hit the fellow with his own kierre and ran out the back of the house. He was told afterwards by his mother that men had entered the house after he had fled and thrashed her with a sjambok. They had also thrashed his three-year-old brother:

'As I ran from the village, the men rose up from a donga with sjamboks. I was taken to a lorry in which there were many other men. It was so crowded we were crouching on top of one another.

We were driven about 20 km to the community hall at Siyabuswa [the capital of KwaNdebele]. We were made to get off the lorry and walk between two long lines of men who had sjamboks with which they beat us as we passed into the hall. Inside the hall I saw Mr Simon Skosana [Prime Minister of KwaNdebele]. I know him well by sight as I have seen him since 1982 driving in the area. I also know him from photographs and newspapers and from television. Mr Skosana was standing to the left of the door with the strong man opposite him on the right.

The strong man asked my name and where I was from. I gave him a false name and I told him I was from Middelburg. The strong man punched my chin with his fist and slapped my cheek. Mr Skosana hit me twice with his sjambok. I then sat down on the floor. There were many other men already sitting there.

I watched men coming through the door being beaten and sjambokked by the strong man and Mr Skosana. When everyone was in the hall, men from the long lines outside came into the hall and the door was shut. Mr Ntuli, the Minister of the Interior was already in the hall. He was standing next to a table and he taunted us the whole time, calling us dogs and many more vulgar things. After the door was shut Mr Skosana addressed us. He said he did not want to fight with us if we obeyed his regulations. Men outside the windows and Ndebele men inside the hall were calling: "Kill the dogs". Mr Skosana said they must not kill us, then he left the hall.

Then hoses/pipes were put through the windows and much water was poured into the hall until it was approximately three centimeters deep. Big packets of Omo [washing powder] were put into the water so the floor became very slippery. We were made to take off all our clothes and lie flat in the water.

Mr Skosana put his head in the window and said we must put our underpants on because there were children outside the window and it was not good that they should see men without underpants. We were made to lie down in groups of five in the water and told to swim around. I was kicked and beaten with sjamboks and saw the same thing done to many others. Because the floor was so slippery, my body just spun around. After this we were made to stand by the wall. We were hosed down. When everyone had been beaten in this way, we were ordered to put our clothes on again.

We were told to move to another hall. We again had to pass through two lines of men who had sjamboks. Some of them also had axes. We were beaten as we passed the other hall. In the second hall there were men who called themselves Mbhokoto, they all had sjamboks. They compelled us to shout "siyabuswa, siyabuswa, siyabuswa". It was now late afternoon.

We were told to go back to the other hall where we were made to sit flat in the water with our clothes on. The water was now mixed with blood. We were made to sit in this water until approximately 11 pm. We were then taken back to the second hall where we were lined up on the stage. We were made to take our shirts and vests off. The Mbhokoto sat in the hall staring at us.

Throughout the night we were made to "sit down, stand up, sit down, stand up, sit down, stand up". The Mbhokoto punched us and shouted insults at us all the night. They called us by very vulgar names. If we fell asleep we were beaten with iron bars and sjamboks. All the night they told us that it was our last day on earth and we were to be killed in the morning when the Ministers came.

At 17h30, Mr Ntuli [KwaNdebele Minister of the Interior] came back with a man called Tom Beni. Many other men arrived with them. They then divided into two groups. One group was those

of us who had answered questions in the night such as "where do you hold your meetings?". The other group were those who were visitors to the area, who mostly did not know the answers. They were sjambokked very heavily. Mr Ntuli also used the sjambok to beat them. After that Mr Ntuli told us that we were to be released.

We were taken back to the first hall. At 7.30 am the Ndebeles among us were told they could go home. The rest of us were taken back to the other hall. We were told that Mr Ntuli had been consulting with other members of the parliament. At about 08h30, Mr Ntuli addressed us. He told us we would be released provided we went back to our villages to burn the shops of our leaders and to bring them to him. He said that he would give us until Saturday and if we had not done it by then he was coming to kill us." The men were then allegedly trucked back to their village.

We were afraid because we were supposed to burn the shops and capture our leaders as soon as we arrived. We had been given petrol in bottles to burn the shops. While we were waiting the South African Police arrived and asked us what we were doing there. We told them everything that had happened. While we were talking to them the next lorry arrived. Two cars in front of the lorry and two behind. Each car had four men in it with guns. We told the police that these were the men who had done it.

The police went to talk to them. I accompanied the police. I wanted the Ndebele to know that the police had found us there and that we had not called them. The police asked the men in the car: Why did you do this? The Ndebele said we were caused by our Chief to oppose incorporation. One policeman turned to me and said we had killed two policemen. I denied that this was anything to do with my village.'

One of the policemen suggested to the Mbhokhoto that they should catch Chief Mathebe if they wanted things to come right: 'We emptied the petrol out. We met one of the shop owners and told him what we had to do and that he should take leave to protect his shop and others.'

Mr PD went on to request attorneys to whom he made the statement, not to publicize his name or take his photograph for fear that he would be persecuted by Mr Skosana or Mr Ntuli. His story was confirmed by scores of affidavits.

When pressed to explain the Mbhokhoto attack, KwaNdebele Minister of Education, Mr P J M Kunutu, said that the captives had been taken to discover who had intercepted homeland cars and harassed their passengers. At first he denied the assaults, but later conceded that 'traditional Ndebele ways of extracting information might have been used' (*Star* 10 January 1986).

According to newspaper reports, all in all about 11 Ndebele people, two policemen and at least five Moutse residents died in the clashes of New Year's day and in the aftermath.

Progressive Federal Party MP, Mrs Helen Suzman, said the burning question about the Moutse events of New Year's Day was why the police had not 'protected the Moutse people from the violent degradations of the KwaNdebele vigilantes'.

More than 100 South African riot police in seven armoured vehicles had been seen at Dennilton police station on New Year's Day (*Star* 2 January). But, Mr Chueu said, police had taken 'a very indifferent attitude' to the plight of Moutse residents despite warning of the attack (*Citizen* 3 January 1986). Police rejected these accusations, saying:

'From our daily statements it should be evident that the police are striving to contain the unrest and lawlessness in the area. Our comment on alleged vigilantes is that should any person be of the opinion that there is legal cause of complaint, such allegations can be made available to the police in the form of affidavits' (*Citizen* 4 January 1986).

On 24 January, five of the victims laid charges at the Dennilton Police Station. Charges were also laid against Mr Skosana and Mr Ntuli. They were informed by the officer taking their statements that there were no J88 medical forms available as the forms had been used up by other victims of the vigilantes. However the police officer stated that he would obtain the hospital records. The failure and unwillingness to apprehend and arrest the vigilantes should be contrasted with their vigorous policing of the victim community. Because of the police's failure to protect the community, Moutse residents had been compelled to protect themselves. Indeed most of those who died in the New Year's Day clashes were Ndebeles. A Moutse resident said: 'I don't think they realised we would be so prepared. We have so much to lose and are prepared to fight to the last' (*Sunday Times* 5 January 1986). It appears that matching the intruders with a counterforce is the only salvation the Moutse residents have. Their capacity to fight back on 1 January probably limited the Mbhokhoto action and the Moutse community believe, correctly, it was more effective than waiting for the police.

By February the Moutse community had shown its resistance to incorporation in various ways. Over 500 teachers had refused to be transferred to the KwaNdebele authorities and Moutse — previously a boycott free district — became subject to a widespread schools boycott by pupils. The traders have in large numbers refused to apply to the KwaNdebele authorities for licences. In view of the police's failure to apprehend or in any way discipline the vigilantes (whom the victims identified and whom the police questioned when they were actually transporting their victims), the Moutse community has no faith in the police's ability to protect them. They compare this passivity to the heavy-handed approach to Moutse residents resisting incorporation and particularly the seige and arrest of 89 persons at Keerom. Moutse residents have requested that the police in the Moutse district be placed under the jurisdiction of regional police headquarters outside KwaNdebele. Currently the Moutse police are administered by headquarters situated in KwaNdebele. Residents question the heavy police patrols in the Moutse district. Chief Mathebe pointed out to the representative of the Commissioner of Police on 4 January that it was not Moutse people who invaded KwaNdebele but Ndebeles who encroached on Moutse to attack residents.

On 25 January, Skosana gave official recognition to the vigilantes by

launching the Mbhokhoto movement — with himself as its leader.

The Mbokotho, the name used by KwaNdebele vigilantes who attacked Moutse residents on New Year's Day 1986, was launched officially by Chief Minister Skosana on the weekend of 25-26 January 1986. At the launch, Skosana gave the following powers and objectives to the organization: dealing with people who enforce boycotts in KwaNdebele; dealing with problems affecting family life; dealing with any trouble-maker who may be arrested. Mbhokoto would be entitled to fetch such a person from the police and beat him.

Chief Minister Skosana is the president of the organization and Mr Ntuli is vice-president. The 25 man executive council, comprises businessmen, a traffic officer, the mayor of Siyabuswa and certain other politicians, all appointed by the Chief Minister (*Sowetan* 20 January, 1986).

Moutse residents view the prospect of existence under direct KwaNdebele control with more than dire dread but the cohesion of this community has, unlike Leandra, Ekangala and Huhudi, not been ruptured by the vigilante attack. On the contrary — should Pretoria proceed with its plans, the Moutse community can be expected to challenge both the South African authorities and those of KwaNdebele — even if the price has to be paid in blood. If the authorities blunder on — Moutse will become South Africa's first rural 'no-go' area.

INKATHA AND THE 'AMABUTHO' IN NATAL

KwaZulu is the Zulu homeland situated in Natal and fragmented into about fourteen discrete pieces of land. The Chief Minister of KwaZulu is the most influential and powerful of the homeland leaders, Chief Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi.

Chief Buthelezi is the most renowned of the homeland leaders because of his refusal to accept independence for KwaZulu, his projected image of someone who stands between the central government authorities and the ANC and because KwaZulu is the most populous of South Africa's homelands.

The original Inkatha 'Yakazulu' was founded in 1922 by King Solomon Dinizulu allegedly to counter support for the militant Industrial and Commercial Workers Union. The word 'inkatha' means traditional headband. It was a cultural movement aiming to preserve the Zulu heritage and mobilize popular support for the King. The movement did not last long as its funds were allegedly embezzled. There was at least one attempt to revive it in the 1960's. In March 1975, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi finally succeeded in reviving Inkatha under the name 'Inkatha Ye Nkululeko ye Sizwe'. Initially, its constitution confined membership of the central committee to Zulus, but in 1979, references to 'Zulu' and 'African' in its constitution were replaced by the word 'blacks'. Inkatha claims to have national objectives but has always retained its essentially Zulu character and membership. Although Inkatha has made attempts to extend its base outside its Zulu constituency, particularly on the Witwatersrand, it has not been wholly successful in doing so. It is very difficult to extricate Inkatha from its central role in the KwaZulu legislature, its predominantly Zulu executive, and the reference to non-Zulus as trouble-makers in times when Inkatha has been under criticism. At the same time, however, Inkatha has adopted the ANC flag and uniform and Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, its President, often refers to the time when he was a member of the ANC Youth League. He claims that the Zulu foundation of Inkatha merely serves as an expedient foundation for the 'national liberation' movement, yet the constitution still requires a Zulu to fill the position of its president.

Inkatha has stated its commitment to achieving the abolition of apartheid through non-violent means. It aims to utilize the existing

homeland structures to do so. Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha have repeatedly stressed that they distinguish themselves from the ANC and its military wing precisely on the grounds of their commitment to non-violence. However, since 1980, Inkatha members have been involved in incidents of violence directed at Inkatha critics and, more recently, personalities associated with the UDF.

Inkatha claims membership of well over a million members in over a thousand branches. Most of these branches are in rural areas and all but thirty-six are in Natal. Generally Inkatha members are organized into branches formed according to traditional, political wards (headman's wards in rural areas or township wards in the townships). At the head of Inkatha is a central committee which consists of twenty-five members. Some of the members are elected at an Annual General Meeting. Its style, the constitution notwithstanding, is generally considered hierarchical with initiative and direction coming from the leadership. Inkatha has had a troubled relationship with trade unions. The main black unions have been reluctant to take up Inkatha's embrace. It is difficult to estimate the extent of voluntary membership of Inkatha. There have been suggestions that migrant workers must produce Inkatha cards in order to obtain the necessary documents to obtain passes and jobs. The same is alleged to apply to township dwellers attempting to obtain pensions, accommodation or social welfare. Chiefs who also sit in office in the Legislative Assembly are reported to have a major role in recruiting Inkatha members in view of their power to allocate land, such an ally is important for Inkatha. According to a KwaZulu Legislative Assembly ruling in May 1978, when the public service commission assesses a civil servant's promotion, his standing in Inkatha has to be taken into account and teachers have also been advised to join Inkatha. (See *Inkatha — Reactionary Nationalism or National Liberation Movement* Community Resources and Information Centre (CRIC) 1986 forthcoming; M Lakobs op cit; *August Unrest in Natal* IBR 1985.)

There is no doubt in regard to Inkatha's political style and character that Inkatha is closely associated with Buthelezi. There is undeniably a personality cult around the charismatic personality of Chief Mangosutho Gatsha Buthelezi.

Chief Buthelezi is noted for his extreme sensitivity to criticism from any quarter. He frequently hints or suggests that he cannot always contain the 'people's anger'. This is interpreted by his foes as meaning 'I may unleash my supporters on my critics'. Chief Buthelezi has also threatened to use the full might of his membership against apartheid



Towns and Townships in Natal/KwaZulu

forces. Until he does so there will be speculation as to the exact extent of the latent organizational power of Inkatha. In the interim Inkatha has backed participation in the community councils, again on pragmatic grounds.

In 1979 'Inkatha' was introduced as a one-hour per week compulsory subject at all levels of schooling in KwaZulu. Through the Inkatha syllabus, it was hoped to counter radicalism from the urban areas. Addressing the Inkatha Youth Brigade at Mhlabatini in July 1977, Buthelezi said (referring to the fact that schools in Natal were largely unaffected by the nation-wide schools boycott) that:

'I would be failing my duty if I did not take this opportunity to thank the youth for managing to maintain a balance despite the political traumas in 1977.... I know how some fire-eaters amongst our loquacious self-acclaimed revolutionaries denigrate you.'

Inkatha has become increasingly tough in attempting to incorporate students, schools, and youth initiatives within and under Inkatha. In 1980 when a few of the schools in KwaMashu joined the nation-wide schools boycott, Inkatha leadership explained it by saying that students were being used by 'those people in Reservoir Hills' (an Indian township) and the University of Durban-Westville (an Indian university). Later it was claimed that an unidentified white man was paying KwaMashu children R10 a day for continuing the boycott. This was later elaborated when three Xhosa lawyers were accused of agitating the school children because they received large amounts of money from overseas for defending schoolchildren who got into trouble with the authorities. A KwaZulu legislative member, a Mr Sithebe, stated:

'Standing behind the school uniforms of the children. It smells like Poswa, like Mxenge [Griffiths Mnxenge, a human rights lawyer, later to be assassinated by unknown assassins] and Skweyiya. This is very dangerous. We say "hands-off our children". They just want to destroy so they can scavenge on what is left.'

These particular exchanges revealed how any stirrings of criticism in the Natal townships brought out a tribal or racial chauvinism of the most threatening and sinister kind. A Mr M A Nzuza is alleged to have said to one Indian journalist accused of agitation: 'You must be very careful. You are the near the Indian Ocean and the Inkatha current is very strong.'

In May 1980, a number of students alleged to be involved in the boycott were attacked by a mob armed with spears and assegais. Inkatha and KwaZulu Legislative Assembly official, Oscar Dhlomo, stated at the time:

'We must not be blamed for any action we take against those who are not in school on Monday. We must not be blamed if we lose patience.'

Buthelezi said at the time:

'I know that the people do not seek to march behind a string of scrawny, scraggly, tattered cockerels dancing to the tune of an international band orchestrated by no-good clerics and long-haired intellectuals' (*Natal Mercury* 19 May 1980).

Buthelezi himself soon called for the creation of black vigilante groups to protect school buildings. The groups were ordered to shoot to kill if they saw buildings threatened (see 'Natal Education Boycott' *Work in Progress* (1980) 15). Their actions included attacking students seen on the streets and the abduction in May 1980 of eleven students and two workers from their homes to Inkatha offices in the KwaZulu capital of Ulundi, about a hundred miles north. There, students were lectured on Inkatha and its role in the liberation struggle and then led to the Legislative Assembly where they were denounced as instigators of the boycott and required to explain their reasons behind continuing it.

Throughout June 1980, open violence surfaced in KwaMashu. Adults arbitrarily suspected of supporting the boycott were assaulted as were those believed to be 'agitators'. Here for the first time, township residents were to confront the large groups of assegai-bearing men rallying to the traditional Zulu battle-cry of 'Usuthu' now very much the signal of the 'Amabutho' — the conservative vigilante 'warrior' mobs. The groups also attacked the houses and property of persons believed to be critical of Inkatha. Durban attorney, Aubrey Nyembezi, stated at the time that 'violence has reached epidemic proportions. There are crowds of people patrolling in vigilante groups. Several children are sleeping out in the veld because they are scared.' An interim interdict was sought and granted against various Inkatha officials.

There is not space in this background to list each and every incident in which alleged Inkatha supporters or persons identified with Inkatha have participated in attacks on known or suspected critics of Inkatha or on communities which have exhibited some or other resistance to Inkatha. However, the University of Zululand incident requires special mention. Students at the University of Zululand at Ngoye have a tradition of open criticism of Inkatha and Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's relationship with Pretoria. In mid-May 1980, a student body meeting called upon Buthelezi to restrain Inkatha supporters from attending a graduation ceremony in their uniforms. The result was a fracas before and after the graduation ceremony at which students protested the Inkatha presence. Inkatha 'impis' (warrior regiments) arrived in what was a show of force and assaulted various students including the SRC president. Chief Buthelezi blamed the students and lauded his impis for defending him and his honour. Later that year in June, Buthelezi stated

in an address to the Inkatha General Conference at Ulundi that he would consider founding an alternative university:

'If I find a conflict between Inkatha's aims and objectives... on the one hand, and the activity encouraged or perhaps even tolerated by an institution such as the University of Zululand, even though by a consortium of black lecturers manipulated by a clique of white academics, then I will question the authenticity of the university in our midst... These are fighting words and I seek a mandate from this conference to back these words up with action if necessary.'

Later, students protested against Buthelezi's chancellorship of the university. In 1981, AZASO (the national black students organization, now a UDF affiliate) was banned by the Rector on Ngoye campus. In October 1983, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi was due to arrive at Ngoye university to address a meeting on the campus. There had been tension from a much earlier date between students and the Inkatha Youth Brigade on campus. Students approached the university administration and attempted to dissuade the university from allowing the meeting to take place. Notices had been circulated that this meeting was intended to be a show of force against Inkatha critics. Late on Friday afternoon, 28 October, Inkatha supporters began arriving on the campus from as far afield as Ladysmith. Students entering and leaving the campus were searched for weapons. However Inkatha members were allowed to enter the university with their traditional weapons. Francie Hennie and Mkwande Sithole, journalists on the *Sunday Tribune*, reconstructed the incident from numerous interviews:

'Students claim the morning mist had hardly lifted when Zulu warriors armed with the traditional weapons of war, spears, cowhide shields, kierries and battle-axes slipped on to the campus. Unaware of the impending terror, students said they were eating leisurely Saturday breakfasts when the still mist was shattered by the pounding of sticks and shields and war cries as the Impis swept through the campus. Dazed and startled students stumbled from their hostels to be confronted by the attacking impis. Some in western dress or Khaki uniform with Khaki colours, but most wearing leopard-skinned battle dress. Terrified students fled screaming "Its the Amabutho".'

Most students ran into the twin seven-storey hostel buildings called 'New York' and 'Moscow' and barricaded themselves in bedrooms. But the attackers broke in, they surrounded the hostels, stoning windows before streaming inside to break down doors and attack the barricaded students.

'Two hours later, 4 people were dead or dying and more than one hundred others were taken to hospital to have split heads and stab-wounds treated. The victims ... said the terror of the onslaught will live with them for ever. Pools of blood stained the floors of the hostels. Splintered doors hung from broken hinges, most windows were smashed and mattresses, papers and books littered the corridors.'

One of the students who was killed, Fumani Marivate, was specifically singled out by the Youth Brigade because of the prominent role he played earlier in disrupting KwaZulu Cabinet Minister, Oscar Dhlomo's speech. According to eye-witnesses, the Inkatha Youth

assaulted Marivate until he was semi-conscious, then dragged him outside and hung him upside down from a tree and beat him until he died.

The tone of Chief Buthelezi's comments on the incident seem to support his critics' allegations. In a statement to members of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly shortly after the event, Buthelezi expressed deep regret at the violence. He said that he deplored violence and that he had always tried to lead the youth into democratic and non-violent behaviour. He then went on to put the events which took place at the University into their perspective:

'When there is a cultural event such as the one Inkatha students planned at the University, it is natural for young people to travel from great distances to attend the functions.... I can imagine the deep sense of shock that they experienced when cliques of students began abusing me with their swearing ... our youths, our sons and daughters [are] of a warrior nation and they had gone to the university to commemorate one of the greatest warriors in Zulu history, and the simple fact of the matter is that this violence so carefully plotted, so carefully orchestrated and so cunningly executed produced the inevitable counter-violence.... Youth faced with violence, would have been maimed and perhaps even killed if they could not fend for themselves. We hope that it is now abundantly clear that they can in fact do so. On Saturday, our youth did no more than defend my honour and the honour of his Majesty the King. I must warn South Africa that if this kind of provocation continues which we experienced on Saturday, Inkatha youth will demonstrate their strength and prowess.'

A commission of inquiry under Professor Middleton of the University of South Africa reported two years later that the University needed to tighten its security regulations. He also encouraged the university to remove disruptive students. The report is unlikely to find approval with the students who were the victims of the attack.

Since the incidents at Ngoye there have been other clashes between Inkatha and UDF supporters in a number of townships notably Hambanathi, Lamontville and Empangeni in 1984. However, it was in 1985 that communities in opposition to Inkatha and critics of Inkatha confronted the full terror of vigilante mobs.

1985

Until August 1985, Durban was virtually untouched by the incidents of popular unrest which were commonplace in most larger black urban townships in the country by then. Various reasons have been put forward for this, among them the fact that unemployment figures in the greater Durban area are lower than in certain other metropolitan centres; there is a fairly high incidence of home ownership in Durban townships and, more importantly, the control exerted by the Inkatha organization in the townships falling under the jurisdiction of the KwaZulu authority.

On 1 August 1985, a Durban attorney, Mrs Victoria Mxenge, was killed by two or more black men outside her Umlazi home. Reverend

Mxcebisi Xundu of the Lamontville Anglican Church witnessed the incident, but was unable to prevent its occurrence. A short while later, he was detained in terms of s29 of the Internal Security Act.

During the weekend of 2 — 3 August 1985, a large number of individuals and organizations affiliated to the United Democratic Front (UDF), met to discuss the implications of the death of Victoria Mxenge, and on 5 August 1985 it was resolved by the scholar and student organizations, COSAS and AZASO, that classes and lectures would be boycotted from 5 — 11 August, until the day of the funeral.

It seems clear that among those who attended the meetings, and moved from school to school to encourage participation in the boycott, a small percentage were not subject to the discipline of any secondary or tertiary education organization, or resident or youth association, ie were not scholars or students and probably not employed. Between 5 and 7 August, some incidents of arson and looting occurred, the targets being black-owned shops or businesses in black areas. While initially the targets had a political symbolism, between 7 and 9 August the targets became increasingly confused and theft-orientated. In Inanda, which is a mixed Indian and black area, Indian businessmen were subjected to similar treatment. The national media used the Inanda incident to skilfully propagate and fan the flames of incipient black/Indian hostility in Natal with the result that those actually responsible for by far the most part of the petty violence in those early days escaped notice, a criminal sub-group taking advantage of a situation of deteriorating law and order.

Although black-owned shops in these areas were also looted and there were disproportionately few attacks on the physical persons of Indians, it was the Indian/black clashes that caught the headlines. It was in this situation that Inkatha was to receive considerable acclaim for its call and efforts to curb looters. *The Weekly Mail* stated that Inkatha showed that it was the only body capable of doing so (*The Weekly Mail* 16 August 1985). In fact the vigilantes went beyond acting against arbitrary looting, and their actions took on a distinctly political tone. Vigilantes initially moved into Umlazi on 7 August but by the weekend, car loads of 'Amabutho' were arriving at the townships from various parts of Natal. By 9 August, the Inkatha local branches had organized vigilante groups to do house-to-house searches for looters and goods. While the media praised the vigilantes for dealing with what all the parties called a hooligan element — groups of 'Amabutho' (warriors) seemed intent on using the opportunity to attack the UDF and COSAS members. The incidence of such attacks, some no more than savage

executions, continued for some weeks after the 'bloody eight days of August'. In total over 67 persons died in the first eight days (37 at the hands of the police) and by the end of September it may have been as high as eighty. What took place during this period was recorded in scores of affidavits, only a few of which are referred to here.

Umlazi

Vigilante reaction was rapid and severe in Umlazi. On 7 August 1985 (two days after the school boycott had commenced and after some arson and stoning incidents had taken place), a meeting at the Umlazi cinema was held to commemorate Victoria Mxenge's death. During the course of the meeting, a large contingent of several hundred men, armed with spears and knobkerries and sticks, smashed nearby cars, surrounded the cinema and attempted to gain entry. The bus drivers fled, leaving the mourners at the mercy of the mob. Eyewitnesses report that as women streamed out of the cinema, they were attacked by assegai-and stick-wielding men now feared in Natal as the 'Amabutho'. Nineteen people were killed and more than 100 injured (*Daily News* 9 August 1985). Simphiwe Mgoduso who was present, reports:

'I could see a large group of men outside the cinema. They were carrying sticks, spears or knobkerries and were moving rhythmically and chanting, "Usuthu!" behind them, military vehicles, either hippos of Casspirs, used a spotlight to light up the area near the Executive Hotel. I have never been so afraid in my life.'

Despite eye witness reports of police presence, and the fact that there was widespread use of teargas that evening, a South African Police spokesman said they were unaware of the incident (*Daily News* 9 August 1985).

Professor Fatima Meer of the Natal University Department of Sociology was also present. She states: 'The meeting was on the verge of ending when attention was diverted by a fearful commotion outside, and like wildfire the message spread throughout the hall that Inkatha was on the attack. The orderly meeting disintegrated into a swirling frantic mass' (*Natal Unrest in August 1985* op cit).

For the next few days, large groups of armed men, the 'Amabutho', roamed the street of Umlazi, attacking schoolchildren and forcing adult men to join their numbers. It appears that many were rural men, bussed in to deal with the looters. They searched houses, patrolled the streets



Amabutho on the move at the Umlazi funeral of previous victims of a previous vigilante attack.
(Courtesy of Billy Paddock)



Amabutho on the move – KwaMashu.
(Courtesy of Billy Paddock)

and pressganged men into joining the search for what was sometimes described as UDF and COSAS troublemakers. Production of an Inkatha membership card was apparently sufficient to satisfy the vigilantes that the bearer was not a UDF member. Many of the vigilantes are thought to be migrants and hostel-dwellers and politically unsophisticated.

Some of them asked for the houses of persons belonging to 'COSCAS' (sic) or 'DDF' (sic). This would indicate that they were following instructions, and had themselves no personal knowledge of the organizations.

Dube Khabela (19 years old), was a COSAS supporter. He also lived at M Section before his house was burnt down. He reports the following:

'A petrol bomb was thrown into the large bedroom where my mother, sister and sister's child were sleeping. The child was killed instantly. I borrowed a car and drove my badly burned mother and sister to Prince Mshiyeni Hospital. On the following Saturday, I went to visit my mother but was informed that she had died. I had to go to the mortuary to identify her and on the following day, Sunday, I went to inform my sister, Rosena but was informed that she too had died. My younger brother, Aubrey, had been shot by a group of men earlier that month. The United Democratic Front assisted with the burial of my family.'

Even the occupants of the house of the assassinated Victoria Mxenge were threatened that the house would be burnt.

Although peace had largely returned to the area by mid-August, the period thereafter, when relatives buried their dead, was not free from the threat of 'Amabutho' attacks. On 26 August 1985 the *Daily News* reported that 300 armed men led by the Deputy Chief Minister of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly, Prince Gideon Zulu, Inkatha Central Committee member, Mr Winnington Sabelo and KLA member, Mr Nzuza, attacked mourners at a weekend funeral of people killed in the unrest. The Inkatha men told the press that they had just come from an Inkatha rally at the Umlazi Stadium and massed on the road shouting the traditional war cry, 'Usuthu!', singing, and banging their sticks on shields. They are alleged to have chanted 'only Buthelezi can lead the people'. Some men were seen kicking over the markers of the new graves (*Daily News* 26 August 1985). The 8 000 mourners left but apparently a group of 70 men and women were set upon (*Natal Witness* 28 August 1985).

On 27 August, Mr Winnington Sabelo ordered all United Democratic Front supporters to 'get out of Umlazi by the weekend'. He said that all cars that did not have Umlazi (NUZ) registration plates, would not be allowed to enter the township (*Natal Mercury* 27 August 1985). Dr Oscar Dhlomo, Secretary-General of Inkatha, later repudiated Sabelo's statement (*Natal Mercury* 29 August 1985). During the height

of the Umlazi unrest, two organizers of the National Federation of Workers, a Durban-base union affiliated to the United Democratic Front, were abducted by groups of armed men from their houses in Umlazi. Toto Dweba's mutilated body was found the following day near Mtunzini on the North Coast. His father said that his throat had been slashed, his head nearly severed from his body and his hands cut off. Morena Mokoena's body was found close to his house after he had been abducted in full view of his family. David Gasa, chairman of the Umlazi Resident's Association, had his house burnt down and was driven out of Umlazi in early September, 1985.

During this period a number of people or their houses were attacked, apparently for no other reason than that they were associated with the UDF or were regarded as Inkatha critics. The attackers in some cases were hooded, but were mostly comprised of persons or led by persons associated with Inkatha or the 'Amabutho'. Much the same pattern was discernible at KwaMashu. On some occasions the mob simply stated that they were looking for UDF houses.

A plainly tribalist tone — never far from the Zulu chauvinism which characterizes the 'Amabutho' — emerged in Umlazi in late October. An attack on a non-political nurse and her 5-year-old granddaughter on 20 October was ascribed to the fact that a rumour had been circulating that about twenty houses belonging to Xhosas in our section of Umlazi were going to be burnt (*Natal Mercury* 28 October 1985).

KwaMashu

Vigilante reaction to boycotts, youth meetings, marches and sporadic looting, was also swift and severe. Soon after the incidents in Umlazi on 5 and 7 August 1985, large groups of armed vigilantes in KwaMashu, Ntuzuma and Inanda, roamed the streets, chasing children of school-going age. On 8 August an estimated 1 000 'spear-wielding Inkatha supporters' paraded through the streets of KwaMashu (*Daily News* 8 August 1985). Methodist Minister, Wesley Mabuza, former Diakonia Chairman, was abducted by armed men on 9 August 1985 at about 19h00.

'I was accused of allowing the United Democratic Front affiliated KwaMashu Youth League to meet in my church. I was made to walk down the road in broad daylight. Many of the men were armed. I was forced to wave my fist in the air, and chant, "The UDF is a dog". About a hundred yards from my home, I saw Mr Tshabalala of the Lindelani area. He is a well-known Inkatha figure. He was with a large crowd of armed men. Only when I agreed to come to the stadium on the following Sunday, did they agree to release me. I no longer live in KwaMashu as I fear for my life.'

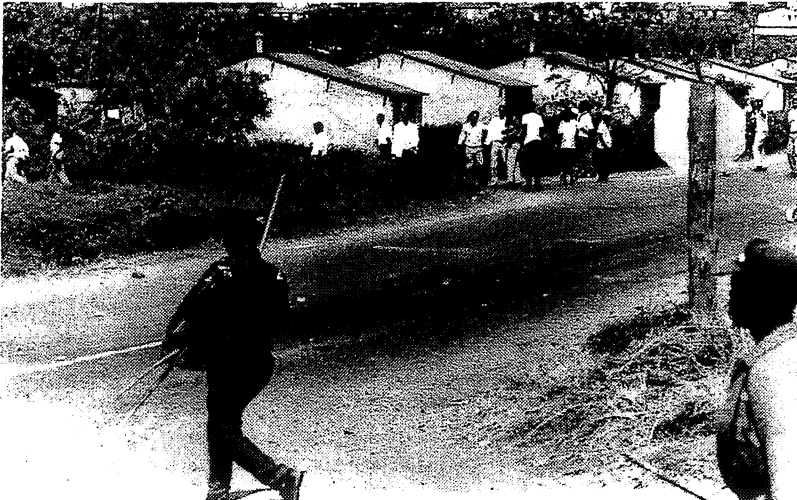
Thembekile Makhoba is an elderly woman of D Section, KwaMashu Township. She recalls:

'On 9 August 1985, I was preparing to go to the market in Durban. As I approached the station, I saw a large group of "Amabutho" [warriors] chasing my eldest son, Mandla. He ran into my house and locked the door behind him. The "Amabutho" chopped down doors to gain entry. When I managed to get into the house, I saw my son was bleeding. The "Amabutho" dragged him into the garden and struck him with bush knives. I cried out that he was already dead, but they continued to cut him.'

Toto Makabane, a KwaMashu Youth League member was kidnapped by unknown persons. His body, with his arms and legs hacked off, was found in a sugar-cane field near Eshowe. Nun Kheswa, another youth leader, was stabbed to death outside his house. Busisiwe Mbatha of G Section, KwaMashu, has three sons who are of school-going age. On 13 August 1985, she was awakened by shots at 01h00. She ran out to see three men running in the direction of a slow-moving Putco bus. The house was partly in flames. Two unexploded petrol bombs were found in the garden. On 10 September 1985, the house was surrounded by a group of armed men and burnt to the ground.

Sibongile Khubeka, an office bearer of the KwaMashu Youth League, reports ongoing hostility between residents loyal to Inkatha and the UDF:

'One Monday evening, in August 1985, the KwaMashu Youth League met as usual in G Section in the Methodist Church. During the course of the meeting, about 90 Inkatha supporters came to the church and began chanting and singing the praise of their chief. As members of the KwaMashu Youth League left the church, they were chased and dispersed by the Inkatha group. On 10 September 1985, a group of armed men petrol-bombed the house of Mrs Mbatha. I telephoned the Durban Central Fire Brigade and I was referred to the Umhlanga Fire Station. I telephoned this station who referred me back to the Durban station. I telephoned the Durban station and spoke to a



Vigilantes move in on children boycotting school in KwaMashu.
(Courtesy of Billy Paddock)

Mr Oberholzer. He said that he first had to get clearance from his superiors as to whether he could take up a complaint in KwaMashu because I fell under the jurisdiction of the KwaZulu Development Corporation. He said thereafter he had to telephone the KwaMashu police to ask them to go to the scene to confirm that there was indeed a fire. He said only then could he send his men. I said the house was burning at that very moment and that by the time he had gone through the necessary procedures, the house would be burned down to the ground, which it did.

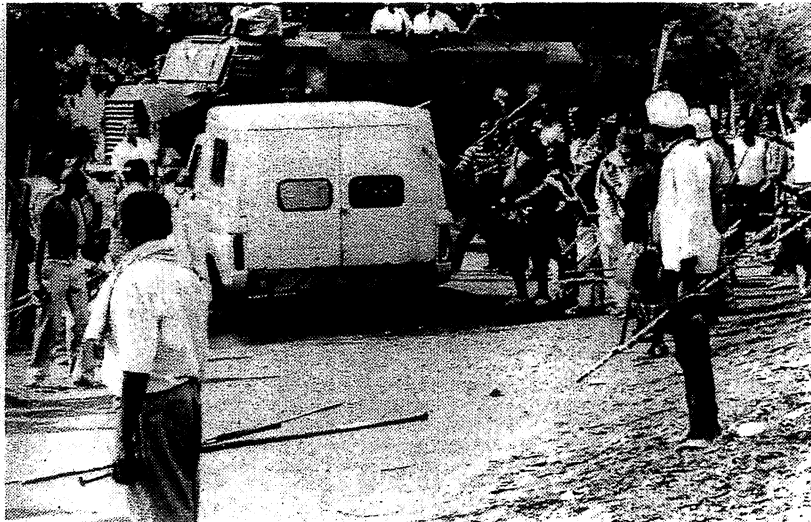
On 12 September 1985, another neighbour of ours, elderly Mr Ngobese had his house petrol bombed by a gang of armed men. The house burnt down and Mr Ngobese died of burns. Immediately after they attacked his house, they bombed my mother's house at G923. I telephoned the KwaMashu Police Station and said that my mother's house was being attacked by a group of armed men. I spoke to a Major Fourie. He said that he had received the report about Mr Ngobese's house. I replied that my mother's house was under attack. He accused me of wasting his time and put the receiver down during the course of our conversation.'

On the same date Mr Mbuli, an attorney who has appeared in security trials, fled KwaMashu after a group of approximately 200 men went on the rampage, attacking houses whose occupants were mostly UDF members (*Natal Mercury* 12 September 1985).

A familiar pattern in many of the statements of both KwaMashu and Umlazi victims, is the apparent reluctance of police to intervene or disperse the 'Amabutho'.

Lamontville

Lamontville, a small established township under the control of the administration board and adjacent to Umlazi, was largely untouched by the events of August. Its residents, like those of Chesterville, have been



Vigilantes arrive in Lamontville after attending an Inkatha rally in Umlazi. Police watch while vigilantes attack a delivery vehicle.

(Courtesy of Billy Paddock)

strongly opposed to the incorporation of their township into KwaZulu. A civic leader, Harrison Dube, had, in addition to leading the protest against the incorporation, led resistance to rent and transport hikes.

His murder in 1983 (in which a community councillor was implicated) led to an outbreak of violence there. Since then there has been growing disaffection between popular organizations in this community and Inkatha. The first confrontation between Lamontville residents and vigilantes was on 28 September 1985. A Shaka Day rally was held by Inkatha at the Umlazi Stadium on Saturday 28 September 1985 where Chief Buthelezi was the main speaker. During the course of the rally, a large group of people, including the Inkatha Central Committee member, Mr Gideon Sibiya, entered Lamontville. Residents reported that the group attacked them without provocation. Four of the group were killed during a clash with Lamontville youths. The incident is reported to have left seven dead and twelve injured.

Later that afternoon, a second group of men (linked by the residents to the Inkatha rally), many wearing traditional dress and led by Prince Gideon Zulu of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly, arrived in Lamontville in three buses. Residents state that a second attack was launched on them by the group. A further two people were killed (*Sunday Tribune* 29 September 1985).

Some days after this incident, the Lamontville Anglican Church of Reverend Mxcebisi Xundu, also a UDF leader, was surrounded by a group of chanting armed men. Amid calls for Xundu to present himself, attempts were made to burn the church itself. Residents stated that the group were definitely not Lamontville people.

Chesterville

Vigilante violence has only fairly recently come to Chesterville which is also a small well-established township north-west of Durban. A group of armed vigilantes calling themselves the 'A Team', have been active against people suspected of having UDF or COSAS sympathies since November 1985. Vincent Simelane of Road 25, reports:

'On 10 November 1985, I was attacked by about 7 members of the "A Team", including the three Mpanza brothers. Most were armed with spears and sjamboks. I was stabbed in the head above my left eye and in the back. Whilst I was being attacked, a police van driven by a White policeman arrived. The "A Team" did not run away and the policeman only told them to put me into "the back of the van". I was taken to Chesterville Police Station and later to the Cato Manor Police Station where I was charged with causing malicious damage to property.'

Many affidavits were taken from Lamontville residents and some names appeared so often that, in December 1985, frightened residents sought a Supreme Court application against the 'A Team' members.

The interdict was successful and the return day is awaited, ie the confirmation or discharge of the interdict. Zakele Mlambo, also an 'A team' victim, reports that a member of the gang was armed with an R1 rifle whilst he was being assaulted. He too was handed over to the police, assaulted by the police and released according to his affidavit.

Hambanathi

Hambanathi is another small township falling under the control of the KwaZulu government. It is situated outside Tongaat and was originally constructed at the behest of the Tongaat Group for worker accommodation.

The Joint Rent Action Committee (JORAC) arose in 1983 in Hambanathi and Lamontville in response to rising rents and the spectre of incorporation into KwaZulu. Its formation brought immediate and bitter condemnation from the KwaZulu authorities, particularly in regard to the opposition to the incorporation of Hambanathi into KwaZulu. In August 1984, the tension between the UDF-affiliated JORAC and those residents loyal to Inkatha reached a pitch with the murder of a school teacher and community leader, Alfred Sithole, a JORAC member. One-time Hambanathi Community Council chairman, Ian Mkhize, resigned from the council and was elected chairman of JORAC. By October 1984 his house and those of twenty-five other families had been burned, destroyed, or looted. The Zamani creche and the offices of the registered Tongaat Child Welfare Society, were burned down by a large group of people, JORAC members report that on the day of Sithole's death, 26 August 1984, two busloads of vigilantes, appearing as Inkatha supporters, accompanied by four-wheel driver vehicles equipped with a flame-thrower, entered the township and set alight ten houses, including that of Alfred Sithole. JORAC members who were subject to harrassment, fled the township and took refuge at a private school near Verulam.

Mkhize tried to defuse the conflict with Inkatha, saying he was not against KwaZulu, but that he was against losing his South African citizenship. Chief Buthelezi however is reported to have adopted the attitude that the refugees would only be allowed to return to Hambanathi if they withdrew charges laid against Inkatha members and apologized to him. As it was, only one case was prosecuted. The accused claimed to have been paid to attack UDF homes. The administration board authorities effected repairs to the houses over four months and in January 1985 the Hambanathi refugees returned. In May 1985 tensions again reached breaking-point and JORAC members were once more

attacked and forced to flee the township.

Mrs G Masinga was frogmarched by a mob to the offices of the Administration Board Labour Bureau where she was whipped and threatened with death if she did not leave the township forthwith. Mrs G Tyalili was also marched to the township offices and informed by community councillors that she was to leave the township. She returned to her house but three hours later an armed 'Inkatha' mob broke into the house, whipped and stabbed her and drove her out of the township. She alleges that the South African Police and Natalia Development Board officials were present when these events took place. It was reported that the targeted JORAC families were requested to leave the area by the community council (*Sunday Tribune* 16 May 1985).

The incidents of violence against JORAC members were so blatant that the South African Police could not ignore the public pressure to prosecute. Several people were charged with public violence and assault and/or malicious damage to property and were convicted and received jail sentences. Among these was Norah Dlamini, a leading member of Inkatha's Women's Brigade. The convictions and sentences are now the subject of appeal.

Approximately 100 JORAC refugees were given shelter at the Gandhi Settlement in Phoenix, Inanda, after they were driven from Hambanathi in May 1985. They were again forced to leave in August 1985 when the settlement was burnt to the ground.

Pietermaritzburg/Imbali

This area also experienced sporadic boycotting and incidents of violence. Individuals and organizations affiliated to the UDF were the target of harassment by the state or persons some of whom were associated with Inkatha and the community council.

On 18 August an Imbali Civic Association leader had his house attacked and car bombed. The following day, a group of men including, some Inkatha members, manned a roadblock at the entrance to Imbali. Police in the area denied knowledge of the roadblock. The following night about 50 men attacked a COSAS member, Zondi, chanting 'we kill the dogs'. They killed Zondi.

On 30 August 1985, a group of 100 armed men, led by Imbali 'mayor', Mr P Pakkies, Mr Jele, the Imbali Inkatha chairman, and local KwaZulu Legislative Assembly member, Mr V Ndlovu, marched on the Federal Seminary outside Pietermaritzburg, demanding that it be closed. They claimed that the students were responsible for the unrest. Seminary principal, Dr Khoza Mgojo, successfully applied to the

Supreme Court for an interdict against, inter alia, Inkatha officials, to restrain them from attacking the seminary, which was opposed by Inkatha. Chief Buthelezi refused to act as a mediator and demanded that the interdict be lifted. Mr Jele claimed he was involved as an Imbali resident and not an Inkatha member as did Mr Pakkies who denied Inkatha involvement. Meanwhile many unionist and political leaders who were not in the Inkatha camp, left the township as they felt vulnerable to hit-squad action. On 10 November, the Natal Supreme Court granted an interim interdict against Inkatha's Abdul Awetha, who had featured in other incidents. Awetha had threatened a unionist because his son was a UDF member.

Newcastle

Residents of Madadeni Township near Newcastle are currently experiencing similar harrassment by Inkatha members and the state following sporadic boycotts and meetings over the past months. Muzi Khoza, nineteen-years-old, reports on the events of 26 January 1986:

'Just after midnight, I was awakened by heavy knocking on the door. I looked out and saw around thirty armed men. I recognised the mayor of Madadeni, Mr Bhengu and a policeman, Mr Thusi. When they threatened to burn the house, I opened the door and was dragged outside. I was accused of planning to burn down the houses of KwaZulu Legislative Assembly members. People entered my house and ransacked it, taking a UDF T-shirt, stickers and a copy of the Eye newspaper. After this, I was repeatedly assaulted by the policeman, Mr Thusi, with an electric cord and kicked and slapped by others. I was then taken by Mr Thusi to the [KwaZulu] police station where I was interrogated by Mr Thusi, the Mayor Mr Bhengu, a son of KwaZulu Cabinet Minister, Mr Frank Mdlalose. I was asked the whereabouts of National Federation of Workers officials, Matthews Olifant and Richard Maculwane. I was then taken into a small room and assaulted by Mr Thusi by having my head placed between his thighs. At 7.00 Dr Frank Mdlalose arrived and another KwaZulu government man, Hugh Madonsela. They held a discussion for a short while with the police and some 'Amabutho' outside the police station. Thereafter, four security branch members arrived. I recognised Msimanga and Van Hysteen. There were two other white officers. I was taken to the security branch offices in Newcastle and there asked questions about my brother, Ronnie Khoza, and told to list the executive of the Newcastle Youth Organisation of which I am a member. After the interrogation I was driven back to Madadeni.'

Inkatha and the Police

Throughout the period of vigilante activity, certain allegations have been repeatedly made. The first relates to the Inkatha link to the vigilantes ('Amabutho'). In the sense that some Inkatha supporters and leaders have been the driving force behind the vigilantes the allegation cannot be contested. The second relates to the police reluctance to confront the vigilantes. Indeed some deponents have alleged something closer to complicity in at least some of the incidents. Chief Buthelezi has continued to denounce the ANC's approach to violence. He did so on one occasion while 'Amabutho' at his Shaka Day rally proceeded to launch a violent attack on the Lamontville community — considered to

CRIME PREVENTION COMMITTEE WARD 5

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mr

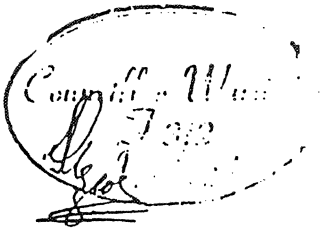
ID NO.:.....

Place of Residence:-.....

is a member of the above committee to fight crime and delinquency
to children.

They are to patrol the ward whenever there is need, for.

SELF - DEFENCE: They have knob knives - Isagila; Spear
(umkhonto) and other weapons of the similar nature.



The Inkatha 'peace-keeping' force were issued with certificates signed by local councillors.

This is a facimile of a certificate obtained by the Black Research Institute in Durban published in *Special report: Unrest in Natal August 1985* . . .

The original certificate was signed by a local councillor known to be an Inkatha official.

be antipathetic to Inkatha. While Inkatha attempted to draw credit for the way the 'Amabutho' dealt with looters (*Clarion Call* (1985) 4), they have done little to denounce publicly (or to curb privately) the campaign of terror perpetrated by 'Amabutho', identified with or led by Inkatha-associated personalities.

Prior to the most violent clash of the period (the 'Amabutho' attack on the Mxenge memorial service) Chief Buthelezi chillingly predicted the violence to come:

'There is no way we are going to accept being terrorized by other blacks, aided and abetted by misguided children and thugs.... I am troubled by the consequences of this thuggery, particularly if the anger of the people who are being terrorized expresses itself in action' (*Natal Mercury* 7 July 1985).

He also blamed the ANC and 'other organizations' for the black-on-black violence. Shortly after the violent clash at the Mxenge memorial, he was asked whether he was concerned about this black on black violence. He replied:

'Why do you raise that meeting. It is the same thing as the burning of shops and so on, I have always warned about the possibility of violence. Rising black anger needs just a spark' (*Daily News* 9 August 1985).

As in the Ngoye incident two years before, Chief Buthelezi managed to both distance himself from the politically-directed executions and to hold out a suggestion of further unrestrained violence for his foes.

EXPLOITING THE DIVISIONS

INTRODUCTION

In reality the composition and operation of recent vigilante groups is not always as simple or clear as the previous sections have indicated. Vigilantes have indeed elicited initial support from sections of the community, support which may have been generated by tensions within the community. Vigilantes are not always composed of a few community councillors with the support of a few others with random connections to them — friends, soccer club supporters, relatives etc. Certain sections of the community are susceptible to vigilante recruitment. Traders with their concern for stability, protection of property and inclination to conservatism are such a group. In a revealing meeting between the Vaal Triangle Chamber of Commerce and a senior police official on 13 November, it was actually suggested to traders that they form a 'self-protection group' and assistance was offered to them to obtain firearms. The fact is that black communities are not the homogeneous, integrated and cohesive communities outsiders might believe them to be.

As is evident from the preceding chapters, there may be intense hostilities between groups and political factions which have competing aspirations. These divergent interests and points of cleavage may be latent in many cases, but can be exacerbated if the community is placed under political and social pressure as in the course of intense resistance to apartheid policies. Pressure is placed on the points of cleavage between groups within the black community. Indeed the conduct of political campaigns can create tensions where none previously existed. Those who feel threatened by resistance to apartheid, either because their material interests are challenged or obstructed, or because of their participation in the overall functioning of the apartheid social structure, may and do turn to aggressive reaction against the campaigners for social change, particularly the youth. Similarly some political activists have ignored sections of the community or neglected to consult and explain the nature of their campaigns. Just as political campaigns can weld alliances in a community, so too can they rupture communities and establish political enmities.

In some cases such conflicts could have been averted through effective political campaigning. Youth organizations, for example, which adopt a vanguardist approach are liable to impose programmes of action on communities whom they have failed to convince and persuade

politically. This may be a consequence of an inability to understand the demands they are placing on the different sectors of the community.

There has been a strong suggestion in some of these communities, where violence has erupted between different sections of the community — fathers against sons, hostel-workers against residents — that divisions have been skillfully exploited either by elements within the community seeking to use segments of the community in their own interests or, alternatively, that the tension has been subtly sanctioned or more openly encouraged by the authorities. Without denying the existence of divisions in the communities, it is alleged that in some areas the authorities have exploited the insecurities of one or other of these groups or alternatively stood passively by when violence erupts, indicating at least to the one group that their conduct will go unpunished. Allegations of direct police involvement in inciting groups have been contested by the South African Police (SAP). However, in Crossroads, Ashton and Queenstown the involvement of the authorities was clearly more than passive.

What applies to traders in the townships also applies to migrant workers, although for very different reasons. The repeated outbreaks of hostilities between hostel-dwellers (migrant workers living in single-sex hostels inside urban townships) and residents of townships reveals just how easy it is to ignite the spark of intra-community conflict. This potential division serves as a useful example of the latent tensions in a black community.

Insiders Versus Outsiders

There has always been some prejudice towards hostel-dwellers by those who have permanent rights to live in the urban areas and have done so for generations. The hostel-dwellers are considered conservative, traditional, even unsophisticated, and also possibly a disruptive influence in the area because they live in single-sex hostels. Migrants, by and large, have a primary concern to earn sufficient income to support families back home in the rural areas or homelands and to return there once they have completed their contract. They are denied by law from being considered permanent urban residents. Frequently neglected by political organizations as they are not considered permanent citizens in those particular areas, they tend to be excluded from the main thrust of political developments. In 1976 they complained that they were not consulted about stay-aways and other strategies. They also have more conservative traditional attitudes towards the role of youth and have responded aggressively to student attempts to prevent them from

working (see Kane-Berman *Soweto: Black Revolt — White Reaction* (1978) 131-2).

During the 1976 civil unrest, hundreds of migrant worker hostel-dwellers at the Mzimhlopi hostel in Soweto banded together to form an impi following attacks on the hostel. On 24 August, armed with traditional weapons of war, these men went 'on the rampage' through Soweto, breaking into homes and attacking residents. The ensuing battles lasted two weeks leaving 70 dead. There were reports, vehemently denied by the police, of policemen not only standing by as the hostel men attacked people, but of actually inciting them to violence. Police were also blamed for having given workers the go-ahead to arm themselves' ((1976) 30 *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa* 1976).

In the same year in Cape Town, after attacks on certain buses carrying workers to work during the unrest and later because of student demands that Christmas be a period of mourning, violence broke out in Nyanga between migrant workers and youths who were calling for a two day work-stoppage. These episodes left a toll of 24 persons confirmed dead and 106 wounded.

During this period there were a number of reports from township inhabitants that police had incited and sided with the migrant workers (*Cape Times* 29 December 1976). These reports were denied. Subsequently the Ministers Fraternal of Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu, and Reverend David Russell produced reports claiming that the police had, at the least, stood passively by while migrants had attacked township residents. Professor N J Olivier, then a United Party MP, stated:

'There seems to be general consensus of feeling amongst the permanent residents of the black townships that the police failed in their duty to protect innocent people, and failed to prevent the contract workers from attacking innocent families and going on the rampage' ((1977) 31 *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa*).

The Cilliers Commission considered evidence on the allegations but found that nothing could justify a finding of deliberate and inadmissible assaults by the police. The Ministers Fraternal, however, stood by their allegations.

The potential for conflict between hostel-dwellers and township residents was illustrated by the repetition of similar incidents in 1985.

Clashes between residents and migrant workers in Tsakane, the township outside Springs, were the most serious. Incidents in which youths clashed with migrants in May 1985 led to the deaths of two hostel-dwellers. Shortly afterwards Tsakane hostel-dwellers went on



Tsakane residents meet to discuss the clash with hostel-dwellers.
(Courtesy of *The Star*)



Tsakane hostel-dwellers sent home after clashing with township residents.
(Courtesy of *The Star*)

the rampage through the streets of Tsakane stoning and burning houses over a period of five days. Hundreds of Tsakane residents fled into the veld, or nearby KwaThema. All in all, an estimated eleven people were killed and the matter was resolved when, in the presence of the SAP, talks were convened between the two warring factions.

The residents insisted that a non-negotiable condition for the normalization of the township was the immediate evacuation of the hostel-dwellers (*Star* 8 May 1985). The following day several thousand migrant workers housed in the hostel were evacuated, many without the opportunity of informing their employers or of obtaining their salaries. It must be surmised that thousands of these simply returned to the ranks of the rural unemployed. While Tsakane residents rejoiced when the hostel-dwellers were evacuated, some commentators were moved to suggest that this was no victory, and that the real criminal was the migrant labour system.

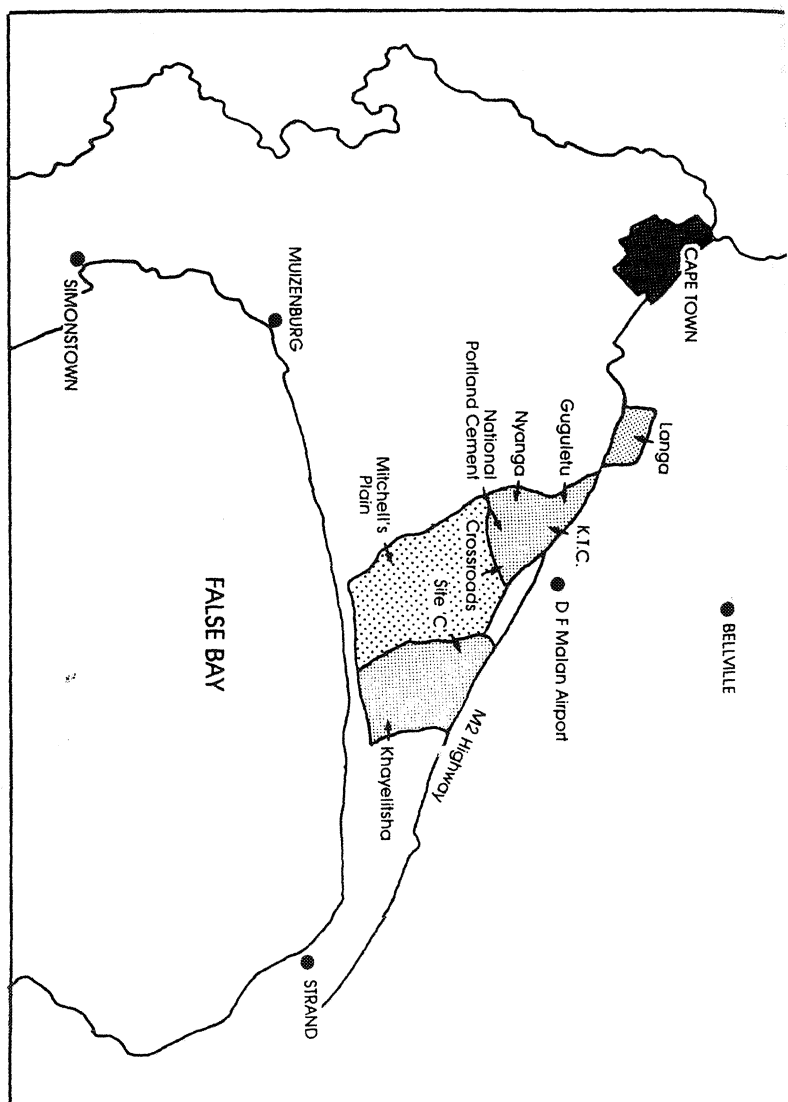
Incidents which followed the same pattern occurred in Mamelodi in the first week of August 1985 leaving three dead, once again at Soweto's Imzimhlope Hostel on October 1985, and in Mohlakeng township near Randfontein in November (*Star* 12 August 1985 and 22 November 1985). Apart from direct clashes between migrants and residents, hostels for migrant workers can be a fertile recruiting ground for vigilantes. This is certainly so in Natal.

FATHERS AGAINST SONS: CROSSROADS AND ASHTON

There has been a dramatic emergence in 1985 of the incidence of inter-generational hostility. Tensions between parents and children have been founded on a resentment of the prominent role the youth play in formulating strategies and making decisions for the community coupled with concern about increasing disrespect for their parents. In Crossroads the resentment was also founded on the way the youth chose to enforce discipline in the community — notably the 'people's courts' and the floggings administered there — as well as the enforcement of the consumer boycott of white shops. This included making returning residents eat their purchases including detergents, soap, raw meat, etc. It was frequently alleged that suspects were not given an opportunity to explain how they had come by the goods and even that the goods were stolen by the youths manning roadblocks in the Transvaal. Local leaders frequently had to threaten the youths and often distanced themselves from the 'thugs operating in our name'.

However, these reasons alone are insufficient explanation for the fierce antagonism between parents and children as evidenced by the

Townships and Squatter Areas in the Cape Peninsula





Prince Gobinco – a leading member of the 'fathers'.
(Courtesy of *The Cape Times*)

incidents in Ashton, Crossroads and Thabong. An additional factor is the attempt by parents to solve social problems within the community within an authoritarian framework, implying that lack of discipline over the youth has been the source of current tensions. This reformulation does not take place in a vacuum, nor does it emerge spontaneously. It is advanced by the same kind of persons who have been prominent in vigilante groups elsewhere, ie the threatened cliques who govern the community councils, or who claim a monopoly of control over the resources and decision-making in the area.

The fact that this form of violence towards the youth has not emerged in many other areas is mostly because youth groups in those areas, who do not already have the support of their parents, have taken extreme pains to canvass support from their community and to select issues which have its support.

Finally, as in the other forms of vigilante activity, there appears to be at least a degree of exploitation of the tension by groups outside the community. The police's alliance with the vigilantes in Ashton, their support for the 'fathers' in Crossroads, and the Thabong council's role in the parental assaults on boycotting children in early 1986, are evidence of this.

The studies below indicate one path which the vigilante action takes. In Ashton and Crossroads it begins as an authoritarian response to the youth. The police find an ally in the group and as the two begin to collaborate the vigilante activity becomes more extensive. This alienates the group from the community and, in turn, strengthens the resolve and aggression of the vigilantes.



A victim of the Ashton Zolani 'amosolomsi'.

Crossroads

As the 1986 New Year began in Cape Town's black townships and squatter camps, hundreds of UDF-affiliated activists were forced to go into hiding from rampaging 'fathers'. Most township people call them 'amadoda' ('men'), others call them 'otata' meaning 'older men', or 'fathers'. The press have termed them 'fathers'. The 'comrades' or 'maqabane' had become the targets of bands of 'men' who roamed the streets searching for the militant members of these communities. Although both terms – 'fathers' and 'maqabane' are utilized in this overview, it is clear from reports by residents in the black townships that the terms are in fact misnomers. Not all 'fathers' are elderly, conservative, or rural men. Neither are 'maqabane' necessarily always the militant youth of UDF-affiliated organizations. Generally speaking, however, the conflict within these areas appears to be taking place between the potentially more reactionary or conservative members of the communities and the more radical residents – young and old – some, but not all, of whom would be linked to community organizations with a political orientation. This section will explore some of the background and context of the so-called black-on-black violence which has occurred in Cape Town's black communities over the past few months.

Although the conflict in the Western Cape bears some resemblance to other areas of the country, it is also rooted in the complex politics of the Western Cape. What follows is necessarily little more than a brief overview of the story of 'fathers' and 'maqabane' in the Cape Peninsula.

Although much of the conflict has centred in and around New Crossroads and the KTC squatter camp (population 21 200), a number of other communities such as Old Crossroads (60 000), Nyanga Bush (20 000) and Site C (33 000) are directly or indirectly involved in the violence that has occurred. Old Crossroads, Nyanga Bush and KTC are all part of the so-called 'Crossroads Complex'. New Crossroads is a township lying between Guguletu and Nyanga East. It was created as part of the Koornhof 'deal' in 1979 when Crossroads was partially reprieved and its 'legal' residents allowed to settle in 'New Crossroads'. Site C is a 140 hectare site and service resettlement area situated between Khayelitsha and the Old Crossroads complex (see attached map).

The fighting and violence which erupted in New Crossroads and KTC in late 1985 can be traced to a number of issues. These include: the death of a community councillor, Mr Siqaza, in New Crossroads, who was hacked to death with pangas and burnt on Christmas Eve; growing

dissatisfaction within the Cape's black communities with the way in which the consumer boycott, schools boycott and Black Christmas had been organized and handled by individuals and organizations associated with the UDF; tensions and divisions over the 'people's courts' which existed in a number of areas ie Nyanga East, KTC and Site C.

The Source of Tension: Community Councillors, Boycotts and People's Courts

Attacks on community councillors' homes have steadily increased in the black townships over the past eighteen months. Specific targets have been community councillors representing New Crossroads. The killing of Mr Siqaza on Christmas Eve mentioned above, is but one of many such killings of 'collaborators'. It was this particular killing, which occurred in the midst of a number of other issues, that sparked off the December/January fights.

A number of residents interviewed from Nyanga East and a nearby squatter settlement, National Portland Cement, allege that the fight which erupted between 'fathers' and 'maqabane' in New Crossroads was directly linked to events which took place in Site C. Apparently there had been increasing dissatisfaction on the part of many residents with the way in which the 'maqabane' had 'monitored' the consumer boycott. They gave an example of how domestic workers in Site C were forced to throw away groceries they had been given by their employers as it was assumed that the goods had been bought at 'white' shops. Others in the community had been forced to eat raw meat, detergent etc. Divisions seem to have escalated in the last months of 1985 over these issues in Site C and in the other black communities. It seems that the failure of the 'maqabane' to explain the nature of these campaigns led to a conservative reaction on the part of some sections within the community.

'Kangaroo' or 'People's Courts'

The setting up of 'kangaroo courts' in Nyanga East, KTC and Site C appears to have been another issue which produced cleavages within the Cape Peninsula. Originally the 'courts' were seen to be 'just' but since the extension to the Cape of the state of emergency on 26 October, appear to have become increasingly controversial structures. One such case, of three women who were given approximately 100 lashes and

treated eventually at the nearby health clinic, received a lot of local publicity and created deep tensions between sectors of the youth, older residents and women in Nyanga East. It seems as though the 'courts' have become controlled by the 'Youth Brigades'. These 'Youth Brigades', comprised largely of unemployed youths, see themselves as concerned with 'law and order' but are rejected by many of the progressive youth organizations within the township, notably the Cape Youth Congress (CAYCO).

Police involvement

There seems to be considerable evidence to indicate that the police's conduct has had some bearing on the conflicts which erupt from time to time within the Cape's black communities. Whilst the pre-existence of tensions and divisions within the community is undeniable, it will appear that the police have given passive support to those who attacked the 'maqabane' in the New Crossroads violence, described below. One such example is that, during the fights that took place on New Year's day in New Crossroads, police vehicles were reported to have been patrolling the areas broadcasting messages such as:

'You comrades must go to New Crossroads to get what you deserve. You are going to shit today. What the men are doing to the UDF is good.'

SAP officials have consistently denied these allegations yet many residents have given sworn affidavits to the PFP unrest monitoring group which substantiate these allegations. Others who have attempted to lay charges against the 'fathers' appear to have met with little success.

Many residents have mentioned a white policeman who speaks Xhosa fluently. He is reported to have reminded the 'fathers' of their traditions, especially the respect that the 'youth' are expected to pay their elders. Although some interviewees called him by a specific name, he remains a mystery figure within the conflict.

The issue of 'disrespect' of youth towards 'fathers' has often been cited as a reason for teaching the 'maqabane' a lesson. Sam Ndima, a long-standing member of the Old Crossroads homeguards, gave this as one of the reasons why the 'fathers' of New Crossroads had been compelled to punish the 'maqabane'. In this case women and youth had been abducted from New Crossroads and kept imprisoned in empty containers in Old Crossroads. Ndima gave his reasons for the 'kidnappings' as follows:

'Unless the maqabane cool down, the people of Old Crossroads will hunt them down and beat them again. I released the people, but they must be careful. The maqabane have to stop making petrol bombs and holding kangaroo courts. We will not allow them to beat and punish their own people.'

New Crossroads

The conflict which took place in New Crossroads at the end of 1985 and continued into 1986, reveals many of the more general divisions discussed above. It is a story which begins with the rent struggle of January 1984.

It also appears that no attempt to detail events in New Crossroads can be done without reference to the dynamics of Old Crossroads. Although separate committee structures operate within Old and New Crossroads, the chairman of Old Crossroads, Mr Ngxobongwana, considers himself, and until more recently was considered by a large section of 'maqabane' and 'fathers', to be the de facto leader of both communities. The person who controls law and order, as well as the economic resources within Old and New Crossroads, lies at the root of the New Crossroads conflict described below.

Following the arrest of 169 women from New Crossroads on 21 January 1985, after a march to the administration board offices to demand the lowering of rents, the committee called for a contribution of R25 from each of the 1 731 households in New Crossroads in order to pay bail. They had soon collected the R8 450 as required. Three weeks after the women had been acquitted, Mr Benga, a committee member, collected the bail money and arranged to pay it out on 23 December. On this date, however, it was discovered that there was only R 2 450. Persons from the community who had not been refunded, were told to return on Sunday 29 December to collect their money.

On Sunday 29 December, a community meeting was held at the school in the township. At the meeting there were various groups from the community wanting to discuss a variety of issues. Some of the parents wanted the return of the money they had advanced as bail, and the youth wanted to know what exactly were the complaints against them which they had heard coming from the 'fathers'. Before these issues could be discussed, however, the committee left, saying there was no time to discuss the bail issue and that they had immediately to organize patrols against the 'enemies from KTC'.

At approximately 17h00, a group of men arrived with a man called 'Prince Gobingca' and a number of committee members. Behind them were two police vans. This group, later referred to as the 'amadoda' – the 'fathers' – called for the men to join them outside. About half an

hour later, an emissary called for the youth to join them. Women stated that they would accompany the youth because they had heard the men speak of 'blood'. Some of the women said afterwards that they thought it strange that the police should be present. Everyone then gathered outside. Prince Gobingca then questioned the youth, asking why they had been throwing people's groceries away, why they referred to themselves as the 'comrades' and what was the point of the consumer boycott. He also asked for details as to the leadership of CAYCO, the dominant youth organization. The children denied having leaders and dissociated themselves from the 'Brigades' (the youth group which had been running the people's courts at Nyanga East). Gobingca became increasingly aggressive and eventually threatened to do away with the youth and women's organizations and instructed the men to form vigilante patrols.

The following day, 30 December, vigilantes gathered on a piece of open veld while a number of them, including one with a loudhailer, announced to the township that the women must stay inside and the men report outside. Men were then impelled to join the patrol.

Mrs Madlavu reports that at about 22h00 that night, she came across the 'fathers'. A group of them approached her and assaulted her and five other women. The women then ran back to their houses. Shortly afterwards, a group of 'fathers' came to her house and demanded that her husband join them. At about the same time, Mrs Figland, saw a large group of the 'fathers' following a group of youths. Behind the 'fathers' was a hippo.

Mrs Bengé's description of the evening provides an adequate account of what took place that night, the partisan attitude of the police and difficulties the community experienced attempting to have the vigilantes arrested. Mrs Bengé reports that that night she heard screams coming from the other side of New Crossroads. Shortly afterwards she saw a Casspir approaching from the direction of Guguletu. She flagged the Casspir down and spoke to two policemen. She told them that there were approximately 200 men with white cloths on their heads and carrying dangerous weapons, on the other side of the township. She was informed by the police not to worry as the men were only chasing 'skollies' and not ordinary people. They were looking for thieves. The Casspir then drove off. Less than an hour later, the Casspir drove back into New Crossroads from the direction of Guguletu. Again, Mrs Bengé and a number of people now standing with her, approached the police and beseeched them to intervene. They had been informed that the 'fathers' were striking children and women. Again the police

attempted to reassure her by saying that the vigilantes were merely looking for 'skollies'. Mrs Benge informed the police that she would hold them responsible if anyone was injured. The police told her to go and sleep, and drove off.

The incident was repeated a short while later. This time Mrs Benge and her friend, Mrs Maduma, had a more heated argument with the police. Mrs Benge asked how the police could allow gatherings of armed people to congregate during the state of emergency when, at all other times, they would take action against such groups. She pointed out that it was not the job of vigilantes to look for stolen cars or thieves, it was the work of the police. Again the Casspir drove off in the direction of Nyanga.

'It was just about then that my son Isaak came running. The witdoekies had hit him with the back side of a panga. His arm was swollen. A van [police van] was standing at the corner of MY78 and Terminus Road. We went to the vehicle and asked the police to do something. A black policeman said: "Don't come and make a noise here".'

They argued with the police for a while but then left as they believed that the police would not take any action against the vigilantes. When they got home, Mr Benge was in his pyjamas and Mrs Maduma was there:

'Aron heard something outside. We peeped through the window and saw a whole group outside. There were a lot of them. They had white scarves on. They knocked. They banged on the door. Front and back. They broke my bedroom window. I shouted through the door "What do you want?" They said "We want your husband and your son. Why didn't your husband come and patrol?" I asked them why they were knocking like that, banging my doors and breaking my windows.'

Mrs Benge eventually opened the door but closed it just in time when a man struck at her with great force:

'I have lived in Cape Town all my life and I am married to a Ciskei man, but I have never seen these sorts of weapons. I think they make them themselves.'

The mob attacked the house and eventually dragged Mrs Benge and her husband outside. Both of them were severely assaulted with knobkerries, sjamboks and pangas. Among the attackers were Gobingca and several members of the committee. Mr and Mrs Benge subsequently had to have stitches at the Conradie Hospital and Mr Benge has lost the use of his right ear. Mrs Benge was abused and told 'You have got your R25 now' (a reference to the bail money). She was allowed to go back into the house and was told to bring out her son. Mrs Benge's son, Isaak, was eventually dragged out of the house. Mrs Benge then saw her husband lying injured. After the mob had left with her son, she assisted him into the house. Mrs Benge immediately phoned the police. After approximately half an hour, the same Casspir arrived, although Mrs Benge is not quite sure if the same policemen were inside.

She told them she had been attacked by the mob of men and that it was the same group that she had spoken to them about previously. She reported that they had abducted her son. The police told her to phone for an ambulance and went off in pursuit of the assailants.

According to Isaak, he was dragged to a field together with a girl called 'Nombulelo'. They were made to stand in the middle of the gathering. The police arrived and Gobingca went to the police vehicle. Gobingca is reported to have told the police that he was questioning the 'maqabane' ('comrades'). Police approached with a torch and shone it on him. He was asked whether he was a 'maqabane' and he replied that he was a 'comrade'. The police then instructed the 'fathers' not to kill Isaak and left. However he was seriously assaulted and a debate took place as to whether he should be killed. One of the men present suggested that Isaak should be let free. Isaak then staggered back home. All three members of the Benge family were taken to hospital. Numerous other people were assaulted by the police. Amongst others, Mrs Benge was determined to halt the vigilante assaults.

The following night a group of 300 'fathers' were attacked by a group of 'maqabane'. A hand grenade blast injured five of the 'fathers' including Gobingca. In retaliation, the 'fathers' abducted two girls and the chairman of the United Women's organisation and held them in a container for several days. By 3 January, four persons had died and six were injured (*Cape Times* 3 January 1986).

Attempts to curb the vigilantes

On New Year's day Geoff Everingham of the PFP unrest monitoring committee and a reporter from *The Argus*, Gaye Davis, went to Mrs Benge's house and were told of what was happening. Later that day Mr Everingham managed to contact a senior policeman responsible for the area (at his home), told him of the situation and requested that he do something about it. On 3 January 300 women presented themselves at the Guguletu police station demanding an end to police support for the vigilantes.

The Benges have made statements to the police; reported on several occasions for identification parades and returned to the police with lists of vigilantes. On Thursday, 9 January, Mrs Benge was again threatened by a group of the 'fathers'. This time, they threatened to kill her and burn her house. The men were still 'patrolling' at this stage.

It seems that in the days and weeks following the attacks described above, whilst a number of young people have been arrested, there has

been little effective action taken against the 'amadoda'. Representatives of the PFP say that the perception of people to whom they have spoken was that the police were not acting impartially and that it seemed that the 'amadoda' were being left to their own devices.

On 13 January a group of women from New Crossroads approached the Black Sash who wrote a letter to the Guguletu station commander. Eventually twelve of the 'amadoda' were arrested but were released on relatively little bail almost immediately. A number of Mrs Bengé's assailants were not arrested and the patrols of the 'fathers' continued. A number of UWO and CAYCO members were forced to leave their homes.

By 18 February the situation was quieter after intervention by the Western Province Council of Churches and some of the 'fathers' apologised to the youths. Many people returned to their homes. Mrs Bengé said she still felt extremely uneasy. The 'fathers' had told representatives of the residents that they had approached the authorities, and claimed that none of the 'fathers' would be arrested and that the leaders of CAYCO and UWO would be moved from the township. Other observers believe that the uneasy peace may also have something to do with the counter-attack by the youth, which has established a fragile balance of forces.

Who 'legitimately' controls law and order in Cape Town's black communities is clearly a central issue in the recent conflicts. Those contesting control are the 'maqabane', the Youth Brigades, 'traditional' committee structures within the squatter camps, community councillors, as well as the SADF and SAP who patrol the black communities.

In this battle for 'law and order' the police and SADF appear to link up on the side of the 'fathers' or more reactionary elements within the communities. Both have a common interest in targetting the 'maqabane': the police, who see them as 'subversives', and the 'fathers' who see them as a challenge to their authority and control over economic resources. In New and Old Crossroads the 'maqabane' youth have been challenging committee leaders who economically exploit the residents. This collusion between police and 'fathers' is demonstrated in the events surrounding the New Crossroads conflict. Prince Gobingca, the 38-year-old 'father' who featured prominently within the conflict that took place there, told *Cape Times* reporters in January that when the 'fathers' met the police they were told that 'It is alright, we can look for the "maqabane" but we must not kill them'. Gobingca said that the 'attitude' of the 'fathers' was that the children were consistently

'disrespectful' to their parents. 'We want to find the guys who have the hand-grenades', he added. 'We want to get our revenge. We can not leave our children to play with us' (*Cape Times* 3 January 1986).

It seems that the following factors have exacerbated divisions and cleavages within the black communities: general dissatisfaction on the part of the 'maqabane' with so-called 'collaborators' ie the community councillors; the setting up of 'kangaroo courts' and the particular way in which 'justice' has been meted out by local 'youth'; the way in which 'progressive' issues such as the consumer boycott, schools boycott and 'Black Christmas' were handled by individuals or organizations; the challenges of the youth to economic exploitation by conservative committee structures within Old and New Crossroads; and the direct interest of the police in containing resistance in the area. These factors provide some of the reasons for the kind of violence which has erupted in these areas over the past eighteen months.

Ashton

Background

Ashton is a small town in the Boland district of the Cape Province. The blacks who work in the area live in the township of Zolani. It is primarily an agricultural region and there are few employment opportunities except in domestic service or at the Langeberg canning factory. In the township of approximately 3 500 people, 650 are employed as seasonal labourers, only 148 have permanent jobs at Langeberg, and a mere 40 people are employed elsewhere.

From November 1985 to the present, the residents of Zolani have suffered under the rule of a band of vigilantes referred to either as the 'homeguard' (the 'tuiswag') or the 'amosolomzi' (the 'eyes of the township').

The community council appeared to operate with little opposition until 1985. The previous council was elected on an 80 per cent poll and the current council on a similarly high poll. This extraordinarily high poll for council elections is believed to be related to promises by candidates to improve road facilities and reduce rents. The previous council had made similar promises but had failed to fulfill them – only one member was re-elected. The present council has seen its popularity erode as it has failed to make good its election promise. Indeed rents have gone up by approximately 30 per cent. The failure of the councillors must, in part, be related to the structural weakness and

impotence of the councils to achieve their promised goals. The current chairman and vice-chairman of the council had, at the time of their election, publicly expressed their support for the UDF. In view of what has transpired since their election, it is unlikely that they would do so now. In November 1985, the unrest which had touched most of the black communities in South Africa, reached Zolani.

Amosolomzi

On 4 November 1985, primary school students began a boycott of classes during which they sang various songs including 'asipwi' (we are not fighting). While they were moving around in a group, they were confronted by an adult resident named Sizi Claas, who threatened one of the children. Claas was later to become a leading vigilante. At this stage, Claas, a worker at the Langeberg canning factory, is alleged to have gone to the factory and called out a group of approximately 40 black workers. This group returned to the township, collected weapons from their respective houses, and confronted the group of children near the hostels. After the children had indicated that they would not return to school, some members of this group of men began attacking and assaulting the children. The assaults began when Kolaas Ndabeni allegedly struck his own twelve-year-old grandchild with a knobkierrie. The children retaliated by throwing stones at the men who then chased them, assaulting some of them seriously. Nola Majola saw her brother, Toto Majola, standing in a field with his hands up, facing the men. She saw the group of men hit him repeatedly with knobkierries until he lay on his stomach unconscious. The whole incident was allegedly observed from a distance by police in a police van standing on a hill above Zolani.

Later that day, a group of men began to move through the township, apprehending, assaulting and delivering to the police children whom they believed had participated in the stone-throwing. The men who were prominent in this episode and who were later to form the group of approximately twenty vigilantes, came to be known as the 'amosolomzi'. From that day on, those twenty men were to rule the township and its nearly 3 500 residents. Among the persons assaulted, apparently arbitrarily so, in their parents' houses, included at least one eight-year-old and a six-year-old.

Despite the fact that the vigilantes' children had participated in the boycott, none of these children were arrested and received only private beatings.

From the evening of 4 November onwards, township residents were introduced to an unlawful and ruthlessly imposed curfew from 21h00. Every night at around 20h45 a siren would ring and then ring again at 21h00. Anybody found outdoors after this hour, was immediately instructed to return indoors or was assaulted if reaction to the command was tardy. Similarly, from 21h00 on, all cars wishing to enter Zolani were stopped, searched and the drivers questioned as to the nature of their business. This was performed by the 'homeguard', or 'amosolomzi', armed with knobkierries, sticks, sjamboks and other weapons.

On 20 November, two houses belonging to members of the 'homeguard' were set alight. The same day a large number of people, approximately 80, were taken into detention or assaulted by the 'homeguard' in the presence of police or both. A policeman called Lange assisted one of the vigilantes in harassing a 45-year-old woman and aiming his gun at her head, threatening to shoot her because she had exchanged words with one of the vigilantes. Another policeman, Hansen, participated in the assault of a sixty-one-year-old woman, Sophie Mbovane, at the same time as two of the vigilantes were assaulting her and her daughters. Mrs Mbovane was then subjected to abusive remarks because her dress had come open while she was being hit and kicked. It appears at this stage that the police and the 'homeguard' made no effort to hide their very close working relationship. An eleven-year-old boy, Abednego Matoti, was detained by the police-vigilante party simply because he cried when his sister was taken by the police and vigilantes. The eleven-year-old boy was summarily released after forty-eight hours without being charged and told to walk back to Bonnievale, a village several miles away from Ashton.

Assaults have taken place regularly in Zolani from 20 November until the present. Numerous residents were assaulted either as a result of being out of doors after nine o'clock or, alternatively, because they had been considered disrespectful or disobedient to the small group of vigilantes who were now running the town with an iron fist. For example, the vigilantes saw fit to take people for questioning at the administration board offices, to question them if they had been seen in the company of strangers and to threaten them if they were considered to be involved in arranging legal representation for the children. Relatives of the vigilantes were exempt from the curfew but numerous residents returning from work, from consulting with lawyers or from the station, were harassed when they entered Zolani after 21h00. Apart

from manning the entrance to the township, the vigilantes patrolled through the streets in an administration board vehicle, generally in the company of a police vehicle.

According to numerous affidavits, police were present at many of the incidents in which residents were assaulted or harassed. The vigilantes themselves claimed they could do as they liked as they had a special relationship with the police, and that the police would allow them to do as they saw fit. One person who had attempted to strike a vigilante while he was being attacked, was subsequently charged and convicted of assault. Another person, 31-year-old Timothy Tyhalisisu, former chairman of the community council, was viciously assaulted in his own yard. He was then charged with possession of a dangerous weapon after his mother complained to the police that he had been abducted. Both mother and son had previously attempted to complain about the conduct of the vigilantes.

The vigilantes have been closely associated with, and include members of, the community council, their friends and relatives as well as local traders. People associated with legal attempts to restrain the vigilantes or to report incidents of assault by police or vigilantes to the Commanding Officer of the police station, have been particularly harassed by the vigilantes, as seen in the case of the Tyhalisisu's (above). The vigilantes have also used their position to settle old scores.

Zolani is situated in a particularly hot area. Prior to the formation of the vigilantes, it was common for people to visit friends and to sit on their 'stoeps' at night. This is now forbidden by the 'homeguard'. Priests and legal advisers who have come to Zolani to take statements or to arrange peace meetings, have been harassed and threatened by the 'homeguard' and on more than one occasion they have been threatened with violence.

Among the people who have been assaulted, are people visiting their girl-friends after 21h00, people returning from the station and those watching television after 21h00 at a friend's house.

Vigilantes have been seen using the administration board facilities freely and openly. Policemen or a police vehicle have been close by when the gang of vigilantes has harassed priests or lawyers, but have failed to come to their assistance.

Police have not only granted the vigilantes licence to do as they please, but have appeared to actively collaborate with them. For example, police were present at the capture and assault on a five-year-old child on 15 January 1986. By February 1986, scores of people had been assaulted, some viciously.

The Ashton Community's Attempts to Obtain Police Protection

On 11 December 1985, a legal adviser in the Montague-Ashton community service, an Anglican priest, Dawie Bosch, and the Director and Assistant Director of the Montague-Ashton community service, approached the officer commanding the Ashton police station, Warrant Officer De la Guerre. They handed him a letter which listed seventeen prominent persons identified as the 'homeguard'. They pointed out that the vigilantes were enforcing an unlawful curfew for which they had no authority, that they had been guilty of acts of violence against members of the community, that they were threatening strangers including priests and lawyers who entered the township and that they were threatening the parents of accused children who dared to instruct lawyers to defend them. Bosch pointed out to the Station Commander that the police had been present at some of these incidents of unlawful violence and had threatened residents with detention or actually detained them if they had asked the vigilantes or the police to account for their activities. The Station Commander was requested to charge these persons guilty of public violence and to properly protect the community. Warrant Officer De la Guerre asked for the names of witnesses of incidents of violence by the 'homeguard'. Bosch informed him that Laing and Hansen, policemen under his control, had been present and that he could obtain further information from them. Further he offered to obtain the consent of complainants to hand their affidavits to the police. He pointed out that he required such permission because the community feared that the police were in cahoots with the 'homeguard'.

The following day, two of the statements were handed to Warrant Officer De la Guerre. Bosch again requested De la Guerre to warn the 'homeguard' to cease their violent activities. He also asked for an assurance that the deponents in the declarations would not be victimized. When requested to disrupt the activities of the 'homeguard' De la Guerre stated that he would not do so.

The following day, 12 December, the two deponents in these affidavits were picked up by the police and taken to the police station. There they were questioned, inter alia, about the activities of the Montague-Ashton advice service, and the police made disparaging remarks about Bosch.

The following day, Bosch visited De la Guerre and objected to the manner in which the so-called investigation was being conducted and the tone of the cross-examination of deponents. He pointed out that Hansen, the investigating officer, had been present during incidents of

violence, had not taken steps to intervene and was, therefore, viewed as being involved in the matter. De la Guerre informed Bosch that the police would do nothing about the curfew unless assaults took place. De la Guerre, who had been otherwise friendly, was apparently irritated by the request that, in future, deponents should be questioned at their homes and not at the police station, since this was intimidating. De la Guerre did undertake, however, to get independent police officers from Montague, a neighbouring town, to investigate the complaints of assault.

On 16 December Bosch took recently attested affidavits to the police. On the same day, two attorneys delivered a letter to De la Guerre, drawing his attention to the fact that an enforcement of a curfew rule was unlawful and was the cause of the current violence. The man then in charge of the police station, Warrant Officer Joubert, refused to acknowledge receipt of the letter.

Thereafter, attempts were made to discuss the matter directly with the vigilantes and, in particular, with the community council. Discussions took place between the Anglican priest of the area and the 'homeguard' on 29 December. This was followed by a meeting with the 'parents' committee' on 30 December 1985. The parents' committee had been formed to assist detained children. The 'homeguard' allegedly refused to accept that the reign of terror was either unlawful or not in the community's interests. Another meeting was arranged, but on 12 January, the chairman of the community council, George Dionas, informed Miriam Tyhalisisu, a sixty-six year-old woman and member of the parents' committee, that the community council had no further interest in dealing with the parents' committee.

Despite the various dealings with the police, Hansen was still operating with the vigilantes on 14 January. The following night, teargas was allegedly thrown into the house of Stanley Mhlomli while he and his family were asleep. A policeman admitted to Mhlomli that he had thrown the teargas into the house, to the amusement of the vigilantes present.

Assaults took place in the streets of Zolani on 17 and 18 January, threats took place against Miriam Tyhalisisu on 21 January and assaults against residents again took place on the 25 and 26 January. On 29 January, a large group of the vigilantes surrounded Dawie Bosch's car and attempted to attack him after he had taken some of the residents back to the township after having had their affidavits attested. Afterwards he phoned the Ashton police station and informed the police of what had happened. He requested the officer in charge to send

a patrol to Zolani to clear up the situation.

On 3 February 1986, Bosch phoned De la Guerre and reminded him of the letters which he had delivered to him in December 1985. Bosch pointed out that the curfew was still being imposed, the siren still rang every night, that he was aware of numerous recent assaults by members of the 'homeguard' and that police vehicles were frequently present during the assaults. De la Guerre replied that he had spoken to community council members and told them to desist from assaulting people. He said that he had investigated the statements which Bosch had handed over to him, but that he would not take action against the imposition of the curfew unless something unlawful happened. Bosch pointed out that the curfew itself was unlawful but De la Guerre replied that it was a question of 'interpretation'. Bosch asked him if he meant that the curfew was not unlawful, but De la Guerre refused to answer. Bosch then warned De la Guerre that unless the imposition of the curfew ceased by 5 February, legal remedies would be sought. De la Guerre replied that he would discuss the matter with the chairman of the community council.

Later Developments

The emergence and modus operandi of the vigilantes in Ashton illustrates the way in which the community council and vigilantes have come to be alienated from their community. In confronting the youth they found a close ally in the police. They have used this position to go further than merely terrorize the youth. They have settled old scores. The township has become deeply divided. Members of the Food and Canning Workers' Union are amongst both the supporters and critics of the 'homeguard'. One of its shopstewards is considered to be on the vigilantes' side and until recently the union has not played any significant role in confronting the vigilantes. A spiral of violence has led to the arrest and detention of scores of children. Moreover the widening gap between the community councillors and their 'homeguard' on the one hand, and the parents' committee and the residents of Zolani on the other, has led to the use of more extensive and threatening powers over the community.

The vigilantes have, besides the backing of the authorities and a monopoly of force, two other particularly significant powers. Firstly, the community council has control over the housing in the townships and has threatened to evict parents whom they consider troublemakers. Secondly, one of the leading vigilantes, Sizi Claas, is employed in the

personnel department at the Langeberg Factory (the only real employer in the town). Already those who have been arrested or detained – no matter how flimsy the charges against them – have been fired by the factory. Those parents dependent on recruitment for seasonal labour are fearful that they will not be taken on – and threats to that effect have been made. Because of the union's role thus far, the residents have not approached them to take this matter up with Langeberg. The vigilantes, therefore, have significant control over two most important resources – jobs and housing.

Some of the community councillors, feeling the growing alienation between themselves and the community, have apparently been granted permission to carry firearms. At least one child has been shot. Of equal concern is that the community council is looking for candidates for its own police force – the 'community guards'. There is little doubt in the minds of the Zolani residents that the community guards will be drawn from the vigilantes. Recently two of the vigilantes were seen in uniforms carrying firearms. It is deeply feared that this development will simply see the vigilante terror of the past continue.

Note: On 27 February an interim interdict was granted by the Cape Supreme Court restraining the vigilantes from enforcing the curfew and assaulting people.

RACIAL VIGILANTES: INANDA AND QUEENSTOWN

In the previous sections it has been noted that vigilante-type action can and has emerged out of the divisions in the black community. It was noted that social disruption arising out of the widespread resistance to apartheid places stress on the points of cleavage within the community. Accordingly, the ability of groups within and outside the community to manipulate social tensions increases. If this is so within the black community, then it is all the more so in a broader racially-segregated community. This is accentuated in South African communities where racial classification is of such legal significance and accordingly affects the material position of the racial groups, in particular access to jobs and housing. No matter that coloureds and Indians are also subject to racial discrimination, apartheid has ensured a degree of separation and differential access to resources that encourages ethnic and racial

tensions. The fact that direct racial violence — between coloureds and Africans, Indians and Africans — has not emerged more frequently over the past year, is largely due to the efforts expended by national and community politicians to prevent racially-based conflicts from developing.

White areas have been largely untouched by the unrest, and in any event they can rely on the most rigorous police intervention should they be threatened. It would also be unsafe for white vigilantes to seek conflict in the black townships. This has not prevented frequent threats to form such vigilante groups in white areas close to black townships — the most recent example being that of whites in the Krugersdorp suburb of Dan Pienaarville. [Since the writing of this section white vigilantes in the Krugersdorp area have apparently raided, assaulted and, in some instances killed, black residents of Kagiso. *Sunday Star* 9 March 1986 – eds.]

In the 1984 ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ elections for the tricameral parliament, UDF-affiliated leaders of the coloured and Indian groups managed to successfully persuade large numbers of coloureds and Indians to boycott their respective elections. They argued that participation in an election which entrenches the exclusion of Africans from political power would be against their own interest. The emergence of national political groups like the UDF, visibly staffed by a non-racial group of activists, has done much to combat racial hostility towards coloured and Indian communities.

However, in a situation where discrete racial groups occupy townships which border on one another, and where the non-African townships are noticeably more affluent than the African townships, then the potential for neighbourly violence always exists. This is particularly so where, as in many parts of Natal, Indians are regarded as the dominant trading class. The resentment of traders by the desperately poor may easily manifest itself in criminal looting where the motive is not racist as such but hunger and greed. In these circumstances, and where the police appear incapable or unwilling to protect one or other of the communities, the emergence of vigilante groups is predictable.

The Inanda and Queenstown cases serve to illustrate how the unrest and the consequent manipulation of the insecurity of different groups has led to the formation of racially-based vigilante groups. The initial impetus behind the formation of the groups is the protection of property and person but whose activities soon become directed towards all those associated with resistance to apartheid, including members of their own

communities perceived to have links with the UDF or township blacks or both.

Inanda: August 1985

Following the assassination of human rights attorney and United Democratic Front lawyer, Victoria Mxenge, on 1 August, there was occasional looting and stoning of symbolic targets such as administrative board offices. This later turned into more general looting in the townships as criminal activities predominated over political direction. Within two days violence broke out in the townships in and around Durban. Pitched battles took place between stick and spear-wielding men ('Amabutho') attacking UDF gatherings and large groups of youths in the townships. The conflict then spread to Inanda, a black settlement, 30 kms north of Durban, where Indians and Africans have been neighbours for more than fifty years. Shack dwellers looted local shops and about 500 Indian families had to flee the area in a mass exodus. They left their homes to the mercy of looters and when they eventually returned, most of their goods had been plundered. They took refuge in the adjacent Indian group area of Phoenix: 'With fears of a race war, reminiscent of the 1949 Cato Manor riots, Indians in large numbers armed themselves with weaponry ranging from hockey sticks to newly-bought fire-arms' (*The Weekly Mail* 16 August 1985).

The most tragic example of destruction at Inanda was the gutting of the 81-year-old Phoenix settlement associated with Mahatma Gandhi, and with his newspaper *Indian Opinion*. In the past few months, hundreds of black refugees who had fled Inkatha-associated attacks in Hambanathi near Tongaat, had been offered sanctuary here. On Friday 9 August, this settlement was stormed by an impi of approximately 300 Zulus shouting 'Usuthu' and setting fire to houses. This gang was chased off by police who then left the scene. Shortly thereafter a group of Indian vigilantes from Phoenix charged into the settlement intent on attacking blacks, blaming them for the Inanda looting. They set fire to the grass and started burning the houses apparently to destroy it before any blacks did so. When challenged by Mewa Ramgobin, a UDF treason trialist, who pointed out that the blacks at the settlement were none other than refugees from Inkatha supporters themselves, they threatened to kill him and attacked him with a panga. Again a contingent of police arrived and then left while the vigilantes persisted with their destruction. They returned later and chased the vigilantes away, but, by this stage, most of the houses had been burned. Shortly thereafter, squatters from another area arrived to attack the Indians

they heard were attacking blacks. The school was looted. Gandhi's house was stripped of its memorabilia and artefacts.

Later, as rumours of racial fighting at the Ghandi settlement spread, Indians from Phoenix and blacks from Kwa Mashu lined up on opposite sides of the road dividing the two areas. The tension brought out a chanting crowd of 4 000 as cars drove through Phoenix shouting 'The Africans are coming! The Africans are coming!' The Phoenix crowd was armed. According to an Indian who was critical of the vigilante spirit which prevailed, 'at the front were the criminal elements armed with knives and pangas, behind them were the businessmen in their trucks armed with rifles and so-on. You could hear these Indian workers talking about how "our" shops had been burnt down — meaning Indian shops when these same shopowners had been ripping them off — but now it was "us" and "them" — Indians and Africans.' Police arrived only after five calls. They kept their distance until prevailed upon to disperse the gatherings.

Vigilante groups were formed in a number of areas. According to a Natal Indian Congress (NIC) activist, they drew in rough elements who patrolled the townships effectively ruling the Indians urban areas. They appeared to co-operate closely with the South African Defence Force (SADF) and police, and were accompanied by Hippos. Indeed the SADF was suddenly welcomed into the unrest affected Indian areas and were served tea on the street corners. As one NIC member commented, whereas Indian and coloured youth had previously voiced strong objection to national service in the SADF, the para-military atmosphere had laid the basis for the introduction of conscription (see *Inkatha* CRIC (1986)).

It was only on 12 and 13 August that the police began to disarm the Indian youths. By then several unfortunate incidents had occurred, including the shooting of a black youngster on his way to a shop in an Indian area (*Inkatha* CRIC 1986).

A *Weekly Mail* article has suggested that at least one of the motives for the attacks was to be found in the economic and political advantages Indians have over blacks. Most of the shops in the area are owned by Indians and the shop-owners have been accused of selling essentials at inflated prices. Indians are also the property owners and landlords in the area. Local squatter leaders are also reported to have said:

'We have been living together in the same area for years without any problems. But we are starving and there is so much unemployment that we are prepared to die getting food' (*The Weekly Mail* 16 August 1985).

On the political level, the tri-cameral parliament and the

participation of some Indians in it was allegedly held against them. This notwithstanding the fact that a very small proportion of the Indian electorate chose to vote in the elections.

However, suspicions have also been fuelled that a variety of interests were served by the attacks on Indians. The Inanda area is destined for development as a black area. The authorities had recently complained that they could not afford to compensate Indian landowners who own approximately 20 per cent of the area. Black entrepreneurs had also been making low offers for businesses in the area. After the current unrest Indian traders have been offered pitifully low offers for their land and businesses and are now more inclined to accept. It was also reported that prior to the incident, intimations had come from various quarters that Indians should be compelled to get out of the area (see Chapter 6 *Unrest in Natal — August 1985* Institute for Black Research (1985)). All sides blamed a criminal element which took advantage of the situation. There were also repeated accusations that the police had effectively failed to prevent the looting of shops and properties of Indians in the area, in a strange reluctance to intervene in this Indian versus black conflict. This undoubtedly was a major factor in the formation of the Indian vigilantes. One pathetic incident witnessed, was that of an Indian begging, on his knees, a Casspir commander to accompany him to his house to salvage his goods. The commander stated he had insufficient petrol. The Indian offered to pay for and obtain petrol but the Casspir drove off.

The insecurity caused by this perception led to the formation of gangs of Indian vigilantes who threatened to take revenge. Clashes between Indian vigilantes and blacks in the KwaMashu / Inanda area were reported on 9 August and the weekend of 11 and 12 August. Eleven Indian vigilantes were later arrested and charged with murder (*Social Indicator* (1985)3). But by this time tensions had eased. As an example of racial vigilante clashes, the Inanda / Phoenix clashes were comparatively minor. Only four of the estimated eighty people who died during the eight week period of unrest in the Durban area were Indian, and only one Indian died (of a heart attack) during the period of looting of Inanda. Undoubtedly the vigilantes emerged out of the fear, insecurity and anger prompted by looting of Indians properties, together with the obvious inability of the police to afford protection at this time. Various reports confirmed the absence of actual racial hostility between Indians and blacks in Inanda, and this is borne out by the fact that in Inanda the attacks were almost all directed at the property and not the persons of the Indian residents.

Queenstown

The formation of a vigilante group in Queenstown is notable for two reasons: there is evidence of overt SAP involvement at the very inception of the group and, secondly, the vigilante group was formally inducted into the state's 'law and order' machinery by being incorporated into the Queenstown Commando (*Daily Dispatch* 20 November 1985, 22 November 1985).

On 18 November, violence erupted in Mlungisi, the black township of Queenstown after police allegedly disrupted a meeting called by the Mlungisi Resident's Association. By 22 November, fourteen Mlungisi residents had been shot dead by the police. A vigilante group composed of residents of the coloured township, Aloeville, was reported to have clashed with blacks almost immediately after the violence broke out.

According to the Regional Chairman of the Association of Management Committees, Mr Winston Jasson, the vigilante group consists of about 400 men. He stated that before forming the group 'we first went to the police and got the necessary permission' (*Daily Dispatch* 20 November 1985). Residents of Mlungisi township claimed that the vigilantes manned road-blocks and searched vehicles entering and leaving the coloured township. Members of the coloured community who were opposed to the vigilantes were allegedly threatened with death and/or the destruction of their property.

The Vigilantes

The vigilantes' method of operation appears clearly from the statement of Rev McGlory Spekman, an Anglican priest living in Queenstown. He says that while driving home he came across a group of fifteen to twenty people, armed with pangas and pick handles who tried to stop him. He managed to evade this group but came upon another:

'When I reached Victoria Park I saw another group of 20 to 30 persons gathered outside the homes of Mr Jasson and Mr Jordaan both of whom are members of the Management Committee. This group appeared to be under the influence of alcohol and I noted that they too were armed with pick handles and pangas. Again an attempt was made to try and stop me but I sped through the group as they struck at my motor vehicle with pick handles and pangas.'

It appears from the statements taken in Queenstown that, whatever the professed aims of the vigilantes, their actions reveal a system of indiscriminate terrorism of Africans unfortunate enough to fall into their hands. The purpose of the road-blocks manned by vigilantes appeared to be the blockading of the township rather than the protection of life and property.

Richard Luxulo Cingo, a resident of Ezebeleni township near Queenstown, describes his brush with vigilantes as follows:

'In an open area near Victoria Road I was approached by four coloured persons and behind them I noticed a Casspir motor vehicle. These four coloured persons set after me and as I feared for my safety I took to my heels. They chased me for some considerable period of time and I heard a gun shot whereupon I felt something in my lower body. I continued running with great difficulty, and reached my aunt's house in Mlungisi Township where I took shelter.'

A bullet which had entered Cingo's back, was removed by means of a blade. He says that he noticed that one of his pursuers carried a gun.

Maphamplo Yako, another resident of Ezibeleni, was driving near the New Rest township when he encountered a road-block manned by vigilantes. He sped through this road-block and a second one but lost control of his vehicle at a third. He leapt out of his car and tried to run away but was caught and beaten with sjamboks.

Caroline Cingo was travelling with Maphamplo Yako, whose assault has been described above. Cingo did not attempt to flee from Yako's crashed car as the latter did. She was 'dragged from the motor vehicle by a man who was brandishing a sickle and he attempted to hit me on the head with it'. Further assaults on her were prevented by a woman who intervened on her behalf.

It appears that the vigilantes' operations were aimed not only at Africans but also at those in the coloured community who were seen to co-operate with or sympathize with the African community and particularly those associated with the UDF.

Gerrit Arends, along with three others, attended a meeting called by the Mlungisi Residents Committee on Sunday 17 November 1985. The purpose of the meeting was to diffuse the tense situation which existed at the time. Arends and those who accompanied him intended to form a body to facilitate 'communication and negotiation with the residents of Mlungisi'. While canvassing the views of residents of New Rest, he, Rev McGlory Spekman and Trevor Smit, were detained in terms of s 50 of the Internal Security Act 74 of 1982. On their arrest a group of people formed, while police surrounded the van Arendse was in, many of whom were armed with sticks, clubs, iron bars and axes. He continues:

'I witnessed one Freddie Lottering, who is also known as "Boer", shout "Arends is 'n ou UDF man". He ran towards the van in which we were sitting and tried to attack me through the wire mesh. He struck at the wire mesh with an axe while Patrick Ambraal shouted similar taunts at us and also struck at the van with an axe.'

The police stood by.

Prior to the arrest of Arends, his wife was visited by a member of the vigilantes who said of Arends: 'Ek wil self vir hom 'n necklace aansit'. After the arrest a group of armed men came to his house, patrolled the street and shouted threats. One of them shouted 'Julle moet lekker slaap. Vanaand gaan dié huis se mense brand!' As a result of the threats

Mrs Arends and her children left the house.

Bernard Eric Macpherson is a teacher at the Maria Louw Senior School in Queenstown. On Monday 18 November 1985 at approximately 01h00, he was awoken by a crowd gathering at his house. Hammering on the doors and windows was accompanied by shouts of: 'Kom uit, kom uit' and 'brand hom, brand hom'. The reason for MacPherson's harassment appears to be that he is 'n dik ding van die UDF'. The crowd left his house at about 02h30 and he claims that at least two police vehicles were present at various times but nothing was done by the SAP to protect him or disperse the crowd.

Trevor Vernon Smit reports of threats on his life on three occasions: he claims that one Renier Lodewyk told him that he (Lodewyk) would kill him because he was a member of the UDF while the apparent leader of the vigilantes, Winston Jasson said to him: 'Ons gaan jou kry want jy het met die swartes gepraat.'

Winston Jasson's press statement to the effect that the formation of the vigilante group was endorsed by the police is backed up by allegations that members of the security forces ignored the plight of victims of the vigilantes. Statements by vigilantes to various people appear to endorse this.

Caroline Cingo, after describing her assault and the assault on Maphamplo Yako says:

'What I find most disturbing was the fact that while this unpleasant and unlawful affair was going on there were policemen in the vicinity and the coloured person who assisted in fixing the motor vehicle informed us that they were working with the police. The Casspir motor vehicle parked nearby did nothing whatsoever to interfere. After I had been severely assaulted I was taken back to my motor vehicle by the vigilantes and in passing the Casspir motor vehicle I was assaulted by a member of the Defence Force with a rifle butt. He hit me on my head and shoulder with the rifle butt.'

Rev McGlory Spekman, after harassment at a road-block, telephoned the security forces. He was told that they could not intervene if the complaints were against coloureds. He nevertheless demanded the state's protection but no patrol came to his house. One of the vigilantes told Trevor Smit, after threatening him, that he had obtained permission from Captain Nel of the South African Police force to kill all coloured persons who co-operated with the black residents in Queenstown. Smit confronted Nel with the vigilante's allegation, he says that Nel's answer was: 'Hoe kan jy jou mense afstaan?' He continues: 'As I was leaving, Mr Lottering [who had made the allegation] said in the company of Captain Nel: "Ek gaan jou kry".'

Incorporation of the Vigilantes into the Queenstown Commando

The decision to 'legalize' the vigilante group may have been motivated

in part at least, by the presence of a legal team in Queenstown assisting the black residents and challenging the police on the use of vigilantes. At a meeting held on 22 November 1985 addressed by a senior police officer, several hundred people, largely supporters of the Coloured Management Committee, decided to form a commando unit. The Border Chairman of the Association of Management Committees, Winston Jasson, is reported to have said that the vigilante group would continue to operate until the SADF had sanctioned the commando unit (*Daily Dispatch* 22 November 1985).

It was reported that more people than were necessary volunteered for service. On 15 December 1985 a passing out parade was held for 93 commandos who had undergone training lasting a week. The parade was addressed by Labour Party MP, Mr M Richards, who warned of a 'communist onslaught' against South Africa (*Daily Dispatch* 22 November 1985).

The *Daily Dispatch* reported: 'They were given a week's training in shooting, urban patrols, road blocks, drill and military discipline, and would be used operationally with immediate effect. They will form E Company of the Queenstown Commando and will undergo another week of training next year' (*Daily Dispatch* 16 December 1985). In other words, with merely a week's training, an assortment of vigilantes were given state sanction and the right to carry arms. It would appear that the Queenstown situation is unique in two ways: it is the first time that a coloured volunteer commando unit has been formed and it is also the first time that a vigilante group has been absorbed into the state's formal 'law and order' machinery.

POLITICAL FEUDS AND THE POLICE: PAARL

In a sense, almost all vigilante activity arises out of struggles for hegemony between competing groups ranging from pro-apartheid or homeland forces to groups competing for the leadership of communities resisting apartheid.

Political rivalry between anti-apartheid groups emerged as a source of fierce violence inside the townships in 1985, notably in the Eastern Cape. Initially termed black-on-black conflict, it is distinguished by the media and township residents from the conventional form of conservative vigilante-inspired violence that has characterized many of South Africa's urban townships. This appears to be on account of the fact that both the rivals purport to be leading the struggle against apartheid and that the catalyst for the violence does not come from the authorities.

But no survey of vigilante-inspired violence or extra-legal violence directed at popular movements and/or leaders, would be complete without recording this source of violence within the black community. It is all the more pertinent to a study of vigilante violence because of the way in which the authorities and the police are alleged to have responded to it. Allegations have been made, most often from the UDF factions, that competing political groupings have received forms of support from the police. The most common allegation has concerned police protection of the one, coupled with a failure to protect the other. At the least, the allegations have concerned the police's reluctance to intervene in order to protect the lives of supporters or leaders of such political factions. It is difficult to assess the weight to be attributed to such claims, or whether police generally exhibit a reluctance to intervene in black-only conflicts. Township associations claim, with some truth, that police investigations or prosecutions of persons alleged to have assaulted or killed blacks in these disputes are nowhere near as successful or expeditious as prosecutions of persons who are alleged to have killed community councillors or policemen. Apart from the accusations of police indifference, there have also been attempts to sharpen the conflict by unknown agencies that have distributed false and divisive pamphlets which fraudulently claim to have been issued by one of the feuding parties. The consequences of the feuding are as disruptive for communities as vigilante activity and, as it was pointed out in the introduction to this book, disorganizing the community is the name of the game.

In March, April and May of 1985, gangs of supporters of the UDF and AZAPO rival movements roamed through the Port Elizabeth townships, attacking one another and persons known to be, or alleged to be, leaders of one of the other groups. The area was referred to as a war zone when feuding was at its peak (*Star* 4 June 1985). AZAPO (Azanian People's Organization) supporters or persons claiming to be AZAPO under the Rev Ebenezer Mqina began contesting with the UDF for leadership in the predominantly UDF Port Elizabeth area. They emerged shortly after the vigilantes' association with former community councillors evaporated. Allegations that they used police protection, were allowed use of community halls denied to the UDF, and used official transport were vehemently denied but continued to emerge. What was certainly true, however, was that internecine strife mushroomed and necessitated that both UDF and AZAPO leaders maintain groups of private guards. Following the death of four Cradock UDF leaders, Colonel Strydom claimed that both groups regularly

sought police protection (*Sowetan Sunday Mirror* 7 July 1985). The conflict simmered throughout 1985. In February 1986 Maqina was expelled from AZAPO and a peace accord was apparently reached between the two groups. Shortly afterwards, eight youths were executed in two incidents, five were allegedly UDF supporters and three, Azanian Youth Union (AZANYU) supporters, who continue to look to the Rev Maqina for protection (*Sunday Times* 16 February 1986, *State of the Nation* November 1985).

As disturbing as is the loss of lives arising out of this conflict, the number of persons who have been assassinated or have disappeared mysteriously and are presumed dead is equally worrying. The existence of the feud has allowed police authorities to ascribe the probable cause of death to rival political factions, while township residents have vacillated between blaming such groups or voicing their apprehension that a right-wing death-squad may be in operation. In Port Elizabeth alone, three leading members of the Port Elizabeth community and supporters of the UDF, Hashe, Godolozzi, and Galela disappeared in May 1985. They have never been found. Weeks later, on 27 June 1985, after attending a meeting in Port Elizabeth, four UDF leaders of the staunchly resistant Cradock community disappeared. Their mutilated bodies were discovered some days later. Many of the features of the conflict generated by political rivalry as well as the insecurity caused by the uncertain role of the police are captured in the incidents which took place at Mbekweni township outside Paarl, in the Western Cape.

Mbekweni

In recent months Mbekweni has experienced violence following resistance to the authorities as well as violence emanating from internal divisions. The internal divisions are described as the conflict between AZAPO-linked organizations and the 'Comrades' who are considered supporters of the UDF.

Paarl has long had a stronger AZAPO presence than other Western Cape townships. This is a legacy of the earlier Pan African Congress (PAC) support in Paarl. The Mbekweni Residents Association (MRA) has the support of AZAPO members. Since 1983, when residents protested against the increase in rents, there has been some conflict as to which is the appropriate body to formulate and organize resistance because of increasing support for the UDF in the area. Following a protest march in the area and the inevitable arrest of hundreds, there was some conflict between UDF affiliates and the MRA over the payment of bail money. At about the same time, there was also an

attempt to launch a new civic association affiliated to the UDF.

There have also been several conflicts arising out of the organization of Mbekweni's thousands of squatters. AZAPO leader, George Bongo, is also a squatter leader. There are 622 housing units in Mbekweni for about 20 000 residents, and housing has long been an explosive issue. As in other squatter communities in the Western Cape, there appears to have been some competition for the allegiance of these squatters. In the case of Mbekweni, that battle was also marked by ideological disputes.

While the disputes in these areas are complex, they appear to have grown out of historical, political allegiances. The UDF is believed to have recently launched a campaign for political support in the area. While it apparently has some support, its presence has also triggered conservatism and antagonism in Mbekweni against the school-boycott and the consumer-boycott, campaigns largely associated with the UDF or its affiliates. In particular it has been felt that the housing issue has been suddenly neglected in favour of newer issues. The AZAPO leadership point fingers at the UDF and also the African Food and Canning Workers Union which has a strong presence in the area.

Tension in the township exploded on the night of 23 November, when the house of a woman, Baba Madubula, was burnt. Mrs Madubula's three-year-old niece also died in the blaze. Mrs Madubula was at one time a member of the AZAPO executive, but left after a disagreement with them. The following night, a prominent UDF activist from Guguletu in Cape Town, Abraham Mokeana, was hacked to death with pangas and knives by a large group of people identified as AZANYU supporters, apparently in revenge for the burning of Baba's house. The revenge motive appears cogent because of threats allegedly made by Mrs Madubula towards UDF-associated persons.

AZANYU is a youth group which has close links with AZAPO. In the last week of November and the first week of December, there were numerous incidents in which UDF-associated youths were assaulted by persons now identified as AZANYU members. A Mr Mahlole twice attempted to lay charges at the police station, but was kept waiting endlessly:

'I have given the names of the men who attacked me to the police and I feel that they are not taking notice of my case because there is something between them and the police.'

A Ms Ndam had the windows of her house shattered by Mrs Madubula's family in the presence of the police. Ms Ndam was then abducted from her home later on 29 November and taken to a house where she was beaten, burnt with cigarettes and questioned about the burning of Mrs Madubula's house. She was abducted by the same group

of armed men whom witnesses had identified as being involved in the murder of Mr Mokeana. Mrs Ndam claims that there were three police vans in the vicinity.

Sometime after the death of Mr Mokeana, distraught youths from Mbekweni sought assistance from the Progressive Federal Party's monitoring commission in Cape Town, saying that they feared for their lives and that they could not rely on the police for protection against Mr Mokeana's alleged murderers. Progressive Federal Party MP, Tiaan van der Merwe, then sent sworn affidavits to the Divisional Commissioner of Police. Approximately a week later, several men were arrested and five members of AZANYU are currently charged with the murder of Mr Mokeana. Strangely, however, they were allowed bail. Police in most areas in the Cape have objected strongly to township residents obtaining bail even on charges of public violence.

Violence escalated in the township throughout December. Two youths claimed to have been abducted and taken to AZAPO headquarters on 23 December. On 24 December, a gang of AZANYU supporters clashed with a gang of UDF supporters. The police intervened, approaching from the AZANYU side and opened fire on the UDF group, killing a youth, fifteen-year-old Mongezi Ninzi, the grandson of Lucy Ninzi, chairperson of the local United Women's Organization. The following night, fierce fighting broke out and three people (all UDF supporters), including the son of a Food and Canning Workers' Union official, Ntemi Phike, were hacked to death and two others were seriously injured. One of the survivors, Patrick Qumsa, stated that he had counted six police vehicles in the area when the attack took place. It was also claimed that a police vehicle escorted AZAPO men through the township, though this has been strongly denied by police and Azapo. Two days later a former PAC member and Robben Island prisoner, Stanford Maliwa, was 'necklaced', allegedly by UDF members. A pamphlet commemorating Maliwa's life and produced by a group calling themselves 'The Africanist Patriotic Front' claimed that the PAC is still at the 'forefront of the struggle against the racist settler regime'. It also stated that he 'preferred to be killed by UDF members because his blood will be accounted for by other Africans'.

What the police's actual role has been is unclear. No further arrests have been made in regard to the other murders. Predictably there have been consistent and widespread allegations that they have ignored complaints on the UDF side in the dispute. On the other hand, squatter leader, Bengo, and AZAPO leader, P C Jones, adamantly deny that 'these boys [AZANYU] can be accused of working with the police'.

Whether the police have actively sided with AZANYU is difficult to verify as Mbekweni was sealed from the outside world in terms of the emergency regulations. The fact of the matter is, however, that most of the fatalities in the clashes, have been people related to the UDF. Even an appearance of police partiality encourages one side to believe it has a licence to commit extra-legal violence, and places their opponents in a position of extreme vulnerability. At the least the reluctance to intervene in 'black-on-black' fights can only lead to further clashes — dividing the community even further.

VIGILANTES IN 1986

At the risk of repetition, it is perhaps worth summarizing the main features and consequences of the nationwide revival of extra-legal vigilante activity in 1985.

The various vigilante groups are in many ways specific to the area in which they emerge. They each have their own internal dynamic which draws on the nature and scale of resistance to apartheid in the region as well as the latent tensions within the community. In general however, vigilante activities are directed at anti-apartheid activists. In the homelands this takes the form of extra-legal violence, openly backed by homeland authorities and directed at pockets of resistance to the homeland regimes. In the case of urban vigilantes, the violence is directed at leaders of popular organizations or youth groups, perceived by the officially-sanctioned black municipal authorities as a threat to their status, credibility, or security. In some cases, the individuals who appear to lead the vigilante groups manipulate or play on resentments or insecurities felt by sections of the community. In this way, under the rubric of restoring law and order, the vigilantes may appear initially to represent a legitimate and popular group purporting to discipline 'siyayonova' (troublemakers).

The second distinctive feature concerning the re-emergence of vigilantes is that, in almost every case, the police have allegedly lined up behind the more conservative of the feuding groups: the fathers against the youth, the community councillors against popular civic organizations, homeland vigilantes against dissidents, and any group that challenges the UDF. Alleged police patronage of vigilantes need go no further than to afford such vigilantes a licence to continue their operations or lethargy in curtailing them. This is sufficient to render the victims of vigilante actions powerless and vulnerable to potentially fatal attacks.

In some areas the accusations against the police and the development board authorities have amounted to precisely such lethargy or indifference. In other areas the police's role seems to have been to actively support vigilantes. This was clearly so at Queenstown, Ashton, Fort Beaufort and Thabong amongst others. In addition, the vigilantes' use of township council's facilities (notably Thabong and Ashton) and homeland government's facilities (in KwaNdebele and Ciskei), reveals a clear pattern of support for vigilante activities by the authorities in one form or another. This does not suggest that the widespread emergence

of this phenomenon has been conspiratorially orchestrated. The pattern of support may derive from the structural position of the police and black local authorities in the current phase of resistance to apartheid, and the inability of conventional forms of control to cope with the crisis in ruling these areas. But the possibility of some co-ordination cannot be ruled out.

Resisting Vigilantes

Communities which are victims of vigilante action are faced with a dilemma as to how they can best resist the vigilantes. Should they go on the offensive and commit equally violent assault on the vigilantes? There is no doubt that they would, in such an event, face the full might of the law and order machinery which had conversely failed to protect them. Should they resort to seeking the protection of the courts and the police? Yet other communities have appealed to neutral arbiters to attempt to resolve the problem. The most notable of these is the Crossroads community where the intercession of the Western Province Council of Churches led to a rapprochement between the fathers and the comrades. In the other cases however, the communities have generally sought to pursue a combination of both legal and extra-legal defences. The extra-legal defences pursued, for example by the Moutse and the Lamontville communities who adopted a policy of meeting might with might, has certainly proved more effective than telephoning the local police station for assistance. The futility of Chief Ampie Mayisa's plaintive plea to the police to protect him, served only to reinforce in the minds of the Leandra residents that the vigilantes had to be met and dealt with violently. The youth in particular increasingly regard violence as the most expeditious, and safest, method of defence.

The pursuit of legal strategies has however paid off in other communities. In Thabong and Ekangala a determined approach to the authorities to curb and prosecute the vigilantes, eventually led to a reduction in vigilante violence. Further, as one student leader claimed in Thabong:

'Now the Thabong town clerk is frightened that maybe his job is jeopardised because he gave the vigilantes the combis of the administration board.'

Legal action forced the town clerk to distance himself from the vigilantes which weakened the group considerably and enabled the victims to reassert themselves.

Legal action can induce the police and other local authorities to distance themselves from the vigilantes. However the problem remains that the most effective legal action — a restraining interdict — is both

Black Community Guards

Numerous posts are available for CONSTABLES with the following Community Councils:

Cape Town (Fezeka, Guguletu)

Paarl (Mbekweni)

Ceres (Nduli)

Stellenbosch (Kaya Mandi)

Ashton (Zolani)

Hermanus (Zwelihle)

Eerste River (Mfuleni)

Duties:

As Community Guards, successful applicants will be charged with the duty of ensuring the safety of the inhabitants in their respective areas of maintenance of law and order and prevention of crime.

General Requirements:

Applicants must be not younger than 18 years and not older than 35 years, and have at least a Std 6. In addition, they must be physically fit, keen to undergo training and agreeable to such security clearance as may be required. Permanent appointments shall be subject to the successful completion of a training course.

Salary Scales:

Std 10: R4 878 x 275 - R6 534 x 312 - R7 158 + 12%

Std 8: R3 884 x 249 - R4 878 x 275 - R6 535 + 12%

Std 6: R2 691 - R2 886 x 249 - R4 878 x 275 - R5 982 + 12%

Please Note:

All new appointments will be on the notch of R2 691 per annum and when the training course has been successfully completed, salaries will be adjusted accordingly, as mentioned above in the case of Std 10 and Std 8 candidates, whilst to a Std 6 candidate one notch will be granted.

Applications:

Applicants can obtain an application form from EITHER the Staff Office, Western Cape Development Board, Goulburn Centre, Goulburn Street, Goodwood 7460 OR from the appropriate offices listed below. Completed application forms must be returned by not later than 14 February 1986 to THE OFFICE OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOR WHICH THE APPLICANT WISHES TO WORK.

Regional Manager
Kaya Mandi Community Council
P.O. Box 378
STELLENBOSCH
7600
Telephone (02231) 7-0200

Chief Executive Officer
Zolani Community Council
P.O. Box 147
ASHTON
6715
Telephone: (0234) 5-1158

Regional Manager
Nduli Community Council
P.O. Box 31
CERES
6835
Telephone: (0233) 2-1056

Chief Executive Officer
Cape Town Community Council
Fezeka
GUGULETU
Telephone: (021) 637-1333

Regional Manager
Mbekweni Community Council
P.O. Box 302
PAARL
7620
Telephone: (02211) 2-1935

Regional Manager
Mfuleni Community Council
Eerste River
P.O. Box 378
STELLENBOSCH
7600
Telephone: (02231) 7-0200

Chief Executive Officer
Zwelihle Community Council
Private Bag
HERMANUS
7200
Telephone: (02831) 2-3730

WESTERN CAPE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

An advertisement published in a Cape Town daily newspaper, *The Argus*, on 18 January 1986. Could the community guards become the new vigilantes?

tardy and difficult to enforce. In the Leandra case the community had to return to court to obtain a second interdict against the vigilantes for contempt of the first interim interdict restraining vigilantes from assaulting residents. There are however yet other difficulties associated with this legal remedy. One of the requirements for the success of such an interdict is that the victims should be able to identify their assailants in order to obtain the necessary order requiring them to desist from their activities. In the case of Moutse, residents were unable to identify by name or address the painted strangers who came from KwaNdebele. For many communities the interim interdict is nevertheless the only remedy available. The main hope for such communities, outside of retaliation, is the publicity that can be drawn to the vigilantes' violence. This certainly worked in the case of the Mdantsane vigilantes in 1983. After the full exposure of their operation at the Sisa Dukashe soccer stadium, the vigilantes were disbanded and Ciskei received international notoriety. It may well have been this experience which persuaded the Ciskeian authorities to renege on the group of vigilantes they had allegedly recruited to deal with the township of Zwelitsha in 1985.

The future of the vigilante groups is not certain. The indications are that such groups will continue to operate in 1986. There is little evidence to suggest that resistance to apartheid is likely to abate and that the conflicts which gave rise to vigilante action will evaporate. In the absence of a concerted effort by the police to intervene and prosecute vigilantes, it is improbable that they will disappear.

However a trend which has caused concern amongst human rights activists and victim communities alike is the induction of vigilantes into the state's formal law and order machinery. The incorporation of many of the Queenstown vigilantes into the Queenstown Commando is one such example. A more prevalent form of this process may well take place through the appointment of community guards, a form of municipal police under the control of the community councillors. It has already been reported that erstwhile vigilantes in Ashton and Thabong have made application to join the community guards. Minister Heunis has stated recently that money has been allocated for the training of 5000 guards ((1986) 40 *Work in Progress* 29).

At a recent passing-out parade, he stated that the community guards would have the task of looking after law and order in the townships. He stated that they should expect to be unpopular and that they may well come under the same hostility as has been directed at black police and community councillors.

The community guards may nevertheless well strengthen the hands of the community councillors in administering a reluctant and captive 'electorate'. However black municipal authorities will be vicariously liable in law for the actions of the guards should they perform their duties in the same fashion as have the vigilantes and it can be expected that vigilante activities will continue to surface alongside such formal agencies.

The vigilantes have made their own special contribution to the spiral of violence in the black areas, as they have to the disruption of opposition organizations. If they continue to operate as brazenly as they have in the past, it can only be predicted that the level of brutality in black areas will escalate dramatically. Such pockets of intense conflict in South Africa will increasingly marginalize the role of legal institutions and will leave behind either the cowed or the vengeful.